



## Community Banking Stories #1 — Wellness & Development Efforts

Community Banking human resources employees

**Summary:** Every April, we celebrate Community Banking Month through a series of BID articles that showcase the efforts of local banks to serve their communities, support their staff, and enrich the customer experience. Some community banks have responded by beginning or increasing their efforts to support well-being and development of both their employees and their community.

Every April, we observe Community Banking Month by shining a light on the special efforts that community banks make to serve their communities, support their staff, and enrich the customer experience. In this article, we share the stories of community banks that have worked to increase their contribution to wellness and development for both staff and community members.

The "[Stress in America™ 2023](#)" survey by the American Psychological Association reveals significant mental health challenges in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite reporting good physical and mental health, a considerable percentage of adults have been diagnosed with chronic illnesses (66%) and mental health conditions (37%). Stress levels increased across all age groups surveyed, with nearly a quarter of adults rating their average stress between eight and ten on a scale of one to ten, highlighting an increased need for mental health treatment.

With the stress, uncertainty, and isolation it imposed on billions of people, the COVID-19 pandemic took a toll on many people's mental health. Some community banks have responded by beginning or increasing their efforts to support employee wellbeing and development.

### A Focus on Mental Health at Midland States Bank

In Effingham, IL, [Midland States Bank](#) and its human resources team saw more mental health-related requests for employee leave than usual during and just after the worst of the pandemic. Along with this trend, Midland observed lower average treatment costs for those conditions. "We concluded that our employees were pursuing care options for mental health less often than similarly situated employee groups," said Chief Human Resources Officer Shonna Kracinski.

Because of these insights, Midland added a mental health benefit to its comprehensive benefits package in 2023. The bank partners with an organization that offers a wellness platform that helps employees bring their best selves to all their relationships, both at work and at home.

Employees and their dependents receive free access to a mobile phone app and desktop digital library of self-paced wellness activities, check-ins, and both group discussions and individual sessions with coaches and therapists. Participants can work on mental, physical, social, and financial wellness with coaches and therapists, who can help them with a wide range of professional and personal development, such as career changes and work-life balance. Therapy sessions can also address more standard mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, and mindfulness.

Employees have enthusiastically embraced the offering. Participants have also experienced quicker access to video therapy via this service — a welcome contrast to the 6-12 months they might have waited to see a counselor locally and in person.

Community Wellness Focus at Nevada’s Lexicon Bank

Lexicon Bank in Las Vegas, NV, is working on wellbeing and development from another angle. Its monthly Community Spotlight highlights nonprofit organizations in the Las Vegas metro area, showcasing their mission, work, events, and fundraisers. So far, the bank has supported more than 50 nonprofits this way, demonstrating the bank’s commitment to adding resources to help increase the general well-being of the community.

Lexicon president and CEO Stacy Watkins is proud of the project’s effort and results. “We’ve inspired other organizations to develop similar programs highlighting the many important nonprofit organizations in our communities,” she says.

Through the Community Spotlight series, Lexicon has developed a new line of niche nonprofit products that have helped it build a reputation as the right bank for nonprofit organizations. Lexicon was voted overall best bank in the Las Vegas Review Journal’s annual Best of Las Vegas Awards on the strength of its Community Spotlight series and concierge service model.

As we commemorate Community Banking Month this April, the stories shared here underscore the vital role of community banks in fostering employee well-being and development. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic's toll on mental health, initiatives like those at Midland States Bank and Lexicon Bank exemplify a commitment to supporting staff and enriching communities. These efforts not only enhance the banking experience but also contribute to building resilient and thriving communities. Please join us next Thursday, April 11, as we continue with our Community Banking Month series.

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ECONOMY & RATES

Rates As Of: 04/04/2024 05:37AM (GMT-0700)			
Treasury	Yields	MTD Chg	YTD Chg
3M	5.42	-0.04	0.02
6M	5.33	-0.05	0.07
1Y	5.02	0.01	0.26
2Y	4.68	0.06	0.43
5Y	4.35	0.14	0.50
10Y	4.37	0.17	0.49
30Y	4.53	0.19	0.50
FF Market	FF Disc	IORR	
5.33	5.50	5.40	
SOFR	Prime	OBER	

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