



## Community Banking Stories #4 — Community Engagement & Support

### Community Banking

**Summary:** Community banks and the people who work for them are often fantastically giving toward their communities. Every April, we observe Community Banking Month, publicizing the efforts that community banks make to serve the people and businesses around them. This article, the last in our 2024 Community Banking Month series, highlights creative and committed community engagement and support programs, including charitable giving.

Throughout April, we have been celebrating Community Banking Month by featuring the important work community banks do through championing educational initiatives, prioritizing wellness and development, and creating new technology and products that help them serve their communities better. In our final article of this year's Community Banking Month series, we showcase the spirit of giving back through charitable efforts.

### Small Business Grants in SoCal

Headquartered in Long Beach, CA, [Farmers & Merchants Bank](#) runs the People You Can Bank On Awards, which took the form of a small-business grant program this year. The program honored small businesses that support their communities with donations of time or money with grants of up to \$5K, giving preference to firms owned by or serving disadvantaged people.

Grant funds served the community in a wide variety of ways, from supplying free haircuts and Christmas toys to funding hygiene kits for the homeless and jobs for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

A team of bank employees also volunteered to pack [200 dental hygiene Smile Kits](#) for kids with special needs. The kits are designed to help recipients become more comfortable with dental care and will be donated to the Thompson Autism Center as well as Special Olympics Southern California.

### Service Dogs for Veterans

Parke Bank in Sewell, NJ, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, makes [annual donations to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Gloucester County](#), which provides a nurturing environment to help children develop life skills. The nonprofit offers a variety of programs through the bank's donations, including after-school activities, sports leagues, and educational events. Parke Bank also contributes to Paws Healing Heroes, which trains service dogs for veterans. Every year, the bank sponsors a dog through this organization.

### Thousands of Acts of Kindness

In Durant, OK, [First United Bank](#) celebrated its fourth annual [United Acts of Kindness Day](#) across Oklahoma and Texas. Participants performed more than 750K acts of kindness (doubling their goal of 350K), from donating books to nursing homes and passing out free cups of coffee in a town square to handing out dog treats at a dog park, paying off school lunch accounts, and hosting a blood drive. Country music star and native Oklahoman Reba McEntire even got into the act, publicizing the celebration on her social media accounts. "We

are overwhelmed by the outpouring of love in our communities and hope this inspires others to change the world, one act of kindness at a time,” said Greg Massey, chief executive officer at First United Bank.

### **A Pavilion with a Stage in Illinois**

In Geneseo, IL, Central Bank collaborated with the city, chamber of commerce, and local businesses to create the [Central Bank Pavilion](#) in 2020. Originally an outdoor restaurant dining space to support local restaurants during COVID-19, the pavilion has grown into a place for hosting concerts, nonprofit happenings, bank events, a summer music series, and even a wedding. Last year, the bank joined forces with a local insurance company and built a stage for the space. It also partnered with the local police department to support police community programs. The Central Bank Pavilion has had a significant impact on the community, and it continues to grow thanks to the bank and its employees.

### **An Award for Supporting Small Business Credit**

In Las Vegas, [Valley Bank](#) of Nevada received an award from the governor for participating in the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). Valley Bank CEO James York introduced the program to other community banks and helped create a community bank consortium to leverage the program. The program has ultimately written [22 new loans](#) for a total of nearly \$39MM to businesses that retained and created 784 jobs as a result. Valley Bank earned the Governor’s Award as the SSCBI 1.0 Legacy Lender.

### **Casual Wear for Charity**

CorTrust Bank serves 37 communities in South Dakota and Minnesota and continues to invest in their success. With nearly 100 years in business, their commitment to collaborating with neighboring cities and towns is unwavering. In 2023, the bank started [CorTrust Cares Jeans Day](#); in exchange for a charitable gift, employees can wear jeans on Fridays. The program has donated more than \$20K to over 45 local nonprofit organizations, including a community theater, food pantries, 4-H and farming education organizations, and a public library.

### **Believe in Local**

Headquartered in Billings, MT, First Interstate Bank began its \$1MM [Believe in Local campaign](#) in 2022 to celebrate the union of First Interstate and Great Western Bank. Believe in Local lets bank employees engage with a local nonprofit and nominate it for a grant. Out of 510 nominations, an all-employee selection committee chose 40 nonprofit winners, and the nominating employees surprised each winner with a jumbo presentation check for \$25K. The Believe in Local campaign honors First Interstate Bank employees’ collective commitment to relationship building, client service, and community outreach. This program enables the bank to continue to demonstrate its company values and strengthen local communities.

As Community Banking Month draws to a close, we’d like to thank the many community banks that shared their stories with us. PCBB is honored to recognize the hard work of community banks and employees, as they continue their dedication to serving their communities. We will continue to highlight their contributions to communities and the improvements they make to their customers’ lives.

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# ECONOMY & RATES

Rates As Of: 04/25/2024 06:36AM (GMT-0700)

Treasury	Yields	MTD Chg	YTD Chg
3M	5.46	0.00	0.06
6M	5.40	0.02	0.14
1Y	5.21	0.19	0.45
2Y	5.02	0.40	0.77
5Y	4.75	0.53	0.90
10Y	4.73	0.53	0.85
30Y	4.84	0.50	0.81
FF Market	FF Disc	IORR	
5.33	5.50	5.40	
SOFR	Prime	OBFR	
5.31	8.50	5.32	

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