Independent Banker
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Columns

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[pull quote] “Through national advertising, media relations outreach, social media and more, we will differentiate community banks in the hearts and minds of Americans.”

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To me, the community bank story is personal. Growing up in a small town and seeing first-hand the impact community banks make shaped not only my career path, but also how I define community. I witnessed how a bank’s connection to its neighbors brings hope, prosperity and continued purpose for so many, demonstrating the importance of supporting one another so all can thrive.

I daresay that’s a collective experience for most community bankers, one so familiar that we almost take it for granted. But too many Americans are in the dark about the community bank difference and the way it changes their community’s potential. They don’t realize the tremendous value in a community bank’s ability to respond in times of need and crisis; they don’t understand the resilience and flexibility that’s afforded by working with a bank that is a true part of the community. They simply are unaware of the genuine difference a community bank relationship can make.

That’s why it’s important to tell our stories. If members of our community have not witnessed the community bank difference personally, they don’t know what they’re missing. When you’re exposed to that impact over time, you see economic development in action—how people come together and how local deposits are used to support the greater good.

In today’s landscape, there are lots of variables competing for our attention: industry change, regulatory pressures, competitive threats and more. But even with these factors at play, it’s more important than ever for us to take a step back, remember why we do what we do and share that with the nation.

This is why ICBA is investing big in the future of our industry with the launch of a national campaign for community banks. The public awareness campaign, which has been two years in the making, officially launched at ICBA LIVE 2023. Through national advertising, media relations outreach, social media and more, we will differentiate community banks in the hearts and minds of Americans.

And we’re making it as simple as possible for you and your community bank to plug into the campaign so our reach can be even greater. With an ICBA member-only national campaign toolkit, you’ll receive access to research and industry insights, along with turnkey deliverables like ads, press releases, social media posts and more that you can use in your local market.

Because as we continue to prove, we are most effective when we work together. So, I encourage you to join us as we educate the American public and our target audience of community-minded millennials and show them the community banking difference. I truly believe this national campaign is central to ICBA’s mission of creating and promoting an environment where community banks flourish.

So come along with us as we shine a light on community banking. Because now more than ever, it’s our time to shine.

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[sidebar] Where I’ll be this month

I’m on the road rallying community bankers to tell their stories! I’ll be speaking at the Independent Bankers of Texas Edge event and then joining colleagues at the Louisiana Bankers Association annual convention in Asheville, N.C.

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