



**BENCHMARK
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PRESS RELEASE

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BENCHMARK MAKES CHANGES IN LAWRENCEVILLE

(September 15, 2016, Kenbridge, VA) – Benchmark Community Bank has announced staffing changes at the Lawrenceville branch. Esther Sanderson, former Branch Manager, has moved into relationship banking with a focus on business development. Nicole Young was selected as her replacement and has been promoted to Branch Manager.

In her new role Sanderson will use her banking experience, relationship building skills, and area knowledge to broaden the Benchmark customer base and support growth in the region. The position is one that will immerse her in the economic development of Brunswick and surrounding counties. Excited about the possibilities, she firmly stated, “I have a vision for the next part of my career to see new businesses develop in our community, to bring jobs back to the area, and to help existing businesses flourish. I’m from here and I want to see this area thrive and grow – I feel very strongly about this.” Sanderson will continue to meet the lending needs of customers within the Lawrenceville branch while working with outside businesses. She started her Benchmark career when the full service branch opened as a loan production office in Lawrenceville in 1999.

Nicole Young, the new Branch Manager in Lawrenceville, brings with her more than a decade of banking and management experience. The Longwood graduate began her Benchmark career in

2006 as a floating teller and has been promoted to positions of increased responsibility during her tenure. As a relationship banker she has been an integral part of the Lawrenceville branch for the past four years. Looking ahead to her new role she is confident about the future saying, “Being Branch Manager is a wonderful chance to serve our existing customers on a very high level and continue to increase our customer base. When people in our area look for banking options, as a community bank, we want to be their first choice. I want to thank Benchmark for this opportunity and Esther for providing a great foundation to build upon.”

Benchmark Senior Vice President, LeAnne Emert, pointed out the advantages to the changes, saying, “During Esther’s 16-year career at Benchmark she has established strong customer relations that have been key to Benchmark’s growth in Lawrenceville. In her new position she will expand her role to include business development needs in Brunswick County and the surrounding communities. It’s a true win-win for us and the region.” Emert further explained, “We are equally pleased to promote Nicole Young to Branch Manager. She knows banking and during her time with Benchmark she has demonstrated a true desire to invest in the success of her customers and her co-workers. This skill set makes her ideal for the role of Branch Manager. Both Esther and Nicole will continue to build upon their strengths and afford Benchmark the ability to better serve the needs of the community.”

Founded in 1971, Benchmark Community Bank celebrates its 45th anniversary this year. The \$533 million locally owned and operated full service bank serves Southside Virginia and northern North Carolina. Full service branches are located in Blackstone, Chase City, Clarksville, Crewe, Farmville, Halifax, Kenbridge, Lawrenceville, South Boston, South Hill, and Victoria, Virginia. Loan offices are located in Henderson and Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Benchmark Community Bank was recently named one of the top 200 community banks in the nation by American Banker magazine for the 10th year in a row. Additional information can be found at www.bcbonline.com.