



PRESS RELEASE

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BENCHMARK MAKES CHANGES IN SOUTH HILL

(September 23, 2016, South Hill, VA) – Benchmark Community Bank has announced a number of staffing changes at the South Hill branch. The appointments were initiated in response to the growing need for commercial and residential banking services in the region.

Vice President John Webb, an 18-year veteran of the banking industry, is now Branch Manager in South Hill. The recent Virginia Bankers School of Bank Management graduate has close ties with the branch. “It’s almost like a homecoming because I started my Benchmark career here in 2012 as a relationship banker,” he said with a smile, “I’m excited about being back.” Rising quickly through the ranks, Webb has held a number of positions within Benchmark, most recently as the Victoria Branch Manager and Lunenburg County Area Manager. He will continue to be the Area Manager in Lunenburg County. Reflecting on his dual role he said, “I enjoy working with all the people throughout Southside. Naturally, I’m pleased to be back in South Hill but the fact that I can still help Lunenburg folks means a lot to me.”

Accepting the position of Business Banker serving the South Hill area is Vice President Kim King. With 24 years in the banking industry, King brings a wealth of commercial and residential lending experience to her new position. She had been South Hill’s Branch Manager since 2009,

when she first joined Benchmark. Reminiscing about that time she stated, “I just fell in love with Benchmark’s common sense philosophy of being flexible for the benefit of the community. It works.” Excited about her role as Business Banker, she then exclaimed, “I’m honored to be given this opportunity to concentrate on serving our business community. I hope to provide solutions that will help the business sector grow and develop. We certainly want them to succeed!”

Senior Business Banker and Vice President Steve Creedle has taken on a new leadership role with mentoring responsibilities. In addition to serving his own clients, Creedle will work with the other business bankers to help structure loans for businesses with unique or unusual situations. A believer in teamwork, Creedle interprets his role this way, “A business loan or line of credit can run from simple to very complex. When trying to find the best solution for the client, a team approach is the better way to go. I might see something my co-workers don’t, or vice versa.” While Creedle seems to have a talent for structuring loans, he attributes his success to Benchmark. “As a community bank,” he said, “we look for ways to make loans that help both our customers and communities grow. Plus, the people at Benchmark are dedicated. They go the extra mile for their customers, not because it’s their job but because they really care.”

Also serving the South Hill market, and new to Benchmark, is Holly Blackwell, Vice President/ Residential Lending. Her focus at Benchmark will be on emerging secondary mortgages and developing community relationships for the bank. She describes her new position this way, “I see my role as one of an advisor, to plainly explain all the options and help guide our clients to their best outcome. Clients need to know that what they want to accomplish is just as important to us as it is to them.”

Benchmark Senior Vice President LeAnne Emert appreciates the investment each person has made to the people of South Hill and views the changes as positive for both the community and the bank. She explained, “It is always a pleasure to see growth in our business that results in new opportunities for employees. Steve, Kim, and John have all built wonderful relationships within the community and are driven to see it thrive. It is a joy to see each of them take on expanded roles to help make that a reality. Holly also comes to us with this same high level of commitment to customers and community. She is going to be a tremendous complement to the team we have in

South Hill. These new changes will even better equip Benchmark to meet the financial needs of our customers in South Hill and the surrounding area."

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.

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