



**BENCHMARK
COMMUNITY BANK**

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PRESS RELEASE

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BENCHMARK ADDS NEW RESIDENTIAL LENDING EXPERT

(September 23, 2016, South Hill, VA) – Benchmark Community Bank is pleased to announce that Holly Blackwell has been hired as Vice President/Residential Lending. After providing support to the bank’s growing mortgage department in Clarksville, Blackwell will focus on expanding the bank’s real estate lending operations in South Hill. She will promote and offer a variety of residential consumer loans, including those for land and new home construction, as well as all types of mortgages.

Blackwell, a business management graduate of Longwood University, joins Benchmark with more than 14 years of experience in the mortgage and retail banking industries. Starting her financial services career in 2002 as a loan processor, she quickly rose in rank, holding positions of loan specialist, branch manager, area manager, vice president of operations, and retail executive.

Benchmark President Jay Stafford is pleased that Blackwell has joined the bank saying, “Holly comes to Benchmark with a proven ability to grow strong, long-lasting banking relationships. She is highly regarded and has an impressive track record of helping families in South Hill and the surrounding area purchase homes. Her expertise in mortgages, extensive management

background, and outstanding people skills are assets that will undoubtedly help grow the bank's residential lending programs. We are delighted to have her on our team.”

A longtime resident of South Hill, Blackwell is very aware of the importance of serving on the local level. “It’s all about community, community, community,” she said with conviction, “I live here, am raising my family here - this is where I want to make a difference.” She continued by stating, “One of the great benefits of being with a true community bank like Benchmark is that the focus is really on the area. Your customer’s dreams of home ownership become just as important to you as it is to them.” Her extensive background allows Blackwell to view her position a little different than most. Being introspective she said, “The knowledge that I have gained over the years in my various positions has prepared me to help my clients make good decisions when it comes to buying a home. And that makes me feel good. After all, for most people, it’s one of the most important decisions they make in life.”

When not helping people finance their home, Blackwell is active volunteering in many civic organizations and boards, most recently completing her term as President of the South Hill Chamber of Commerce. She is the proud parent of two boys, Carter (11) and Reid (8).

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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