Official Newsletter of ICBND

THE COMMUNITY BANKER

NELSON TAKES OVER AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



ICBND
SEPTEMBER/ OCTOBER 2026

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INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY BANKS of NORTH DAKOTA

ICBND STAFF

Alexis Baxley
President
alexisb@icbnd.com

Jessie Pfaff
Vice President
jessiep@icbnd.com

Rebecca Pelkey
Communication & Member Specialist
rebeccap@icbnd.com

Angie Olson
President of Card Services
angieo@icbnd.com

Bill Walker
Card Services Coordinator
billw@icbnd.com

Charlene Davis
Card Services Specialist
cardservices@icbnd.com

Lacey Kuhn
Sales & Marketing Manager
laceyk@icbnd.com

Jess Voegele
Customer Service & Operations Manager
purchasing@icbnd.com

INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY BANKS OF NORTH DAKOTA

1136 W Divide Ave | PO Box 6128
Bismarck, ND 58506-6128

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm

PHONE:
701-258-7121 or 800-862-0672

info@icbnd.com | www.icbnd.com

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Chairman's Remarks



JORDAN NELSON
ICBND Chairman
Peoples State Bank of Velva

I've had the opportunity to put some highway miles on the last few weeks traveling across North Dakota for everything from banking conferences to calling rodeos and football games. Along the way, I've been reminded why fall is my favorite time of year. Growing up as a farm kid, I always viewed fall as a time of gratitude as we wrapped up our harvest. Even though I'm a city slicker nowadays, that sense of gratitude hasn't left me in the slightest!

We have so much to be thankful for as ICBND member banks. In fact, it was easy for me to put together a list on my drive back to Minot yesterday.

1 – First, I'm thankful for another tremendous ICBND convention in Medora. Alexis, Jessie, and the entire crew really outdid themselves this year. The opportunity to experience the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library was the icing on the cake! Events like these are a great reminder of the relationships and camaraderie that make our organization special.

2 – I am thankful for each of our member banks and all the associates fighting in our corner. Our ability to stay engaged, collaborate, and work together for the betterment of our industry is always just so impressive to me. We have the ear of Main Street, and those in power listen when we have something to say because of it!

As we approach North Dakota's 70th Legislative Assembly this January, I invite all of you to stay engaged. Whether that be attending your local legislative forums, corresponding with your elected officials or letting us know when issues arise that matter to your banks or communities, your voice matters! One of the greatest strengths of community banking is the relationships we've built in the communities we serve. Those relationships give us a powerful voice when we speak together. While we don't know quite yet what to expect this winter, I'm confident our collective voice will be heard.

3 – Lastly, I am beyond grateful and indebted to all of you for entrusting me with the opportunity to be your chairman. It is undoubtedly my greatest professional honor to date, and a responsibility I do not take lightly. I believe there is a tremendous amount of opportunity ahead for community banks. We know the challenges facing our industry are real, but so are the opportunities. The work won't always be easy, but it will be worthwhile. My goal is simple: to make sure we leave our association, our industry, and community banking stronger tomorrow than they are today.

I hope you all have a great and productive fall, and I look forward to seeing and working with all of you.

With gratitude,

Jordan





Contact your representative

Keith Gruebele
954.263.6399 | KGruebele@bhg-inc.com

ICBND
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY BANKS of NORTH DAKOTA

ICBND UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 20-21 ▸ Community Bankers for Compliance - Fall Session, Bismarck
- 23 ▸ Community Bankers for Compliance - Regulatory Update, Virtual
- 29 ▸ Advanced Credit Training - Session 2, Virtual

NOVEMBER

- 3-4 ▸ Fall Leadership Exchange, Bismarck
- 19 ▸ Midwest Ag Summit, Virtual

DECEMBER

- 17 ▸ Advanced Credit Training - Session 3, Virtual

FOR DETAILED EVENT INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT ICBND.COM

For information on how to place an ad in *The Community Banker*, contact Rebecca at ICBND by calling 701-258-7121, or by emailing rebeccap@icbnd.com

Share your exciting news with us. Submit your news about new hires, promotions, and press releases to Rebecca at rebeccap@icbnd.com

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Rick Beall
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Kayla Litsey
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Dawn Flaten
Dakota Heritage Bank

Luis Estrada
First Western Bank

Kris Ahmann
Bank of North Dakota

The Independent Community Bank Services, Inc. (ICBS, Inc.) was formed in August 1989 to create an organization that would help any bank provide the best financial services for their community. ICBS, Inc. provides our member banks with a comprehensive menu of cutting-edge products that make running a card program easy and efficient. ICBS, Inc. is a bank service corporation serving the Independent Community Banks of North Dakota (ICBND), and is governed by its own Board of Directors.

President's Remarks



ALEXIS BAXLEY
ICBND President

I hope you are enjoying the beautiful fall season here in North Dakota. I say this every year in this month's newsletter, but this is truly my favorite time of year.

I am grateful to all the bankers who made the trip to Medora last month. Medora never disappoints, and the Library is a spectacular addition to an already spectacular place. I also want to extend a special thank you to our sponsors, exhibitors, and associate members who joined us. Their support is truly what makes convention happen. Please think of them first when your bank has product or service needs. And don't forget to mark your calendars for September 20-22, 2027. We'll be back in Medora for the 59th Annual ICBND Convention.

As we enter the final quarter of the year, my team and I have shifted our focus to planning for 2027. We are excited to build another strong year of programming, including another Day at the Capitol with our Leadership Exchange program on January 19, 2027. If your bank has specific education needs, or if you have an idea for a great webinar, now is the time to reach out to Jessie. Please let us know what you would like to see on our education calendar in 2027.

We are also preparing for the 2027 Legislative Session. Thanks to your support, the ICBankPAC has been able to support several strong candidates for the North Dakota Legislature. We hope to see many pro-business candidates, including a handful of community bankers, elected in November. If you are interested in joining the ICBND Legislative Committee, please let me know.

Finally, please keep in mind that we still have a couple of very timely educational sessions remaining on the 2026 calendar, including Community Bankers for Compliance Fall Session on October 20-21, Fall Leadership Exchange on November 3-4, Virtual Midwest Ag Summit on November 19 plus two virtual Advanced Credit Training sessions on October 29 and December 17.

Grateful for your support,

Alexis

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10 Roberts Street N.
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701-232-8957
serklandlaw.com

Our team of banking lawyers are experienced, zealous advocates for banks and creditors.



BERLY D. NELSON
bnelson@serklandlaw.com



KASEY D. MCNARY
kmcnary@serklandlaw.com

ICBND HOSTS 58TH ICBND ANNUAL CONVENTION



In September, ICBND hosted its 58th ICBND Annual Convention in Medora, North Dakota.

Over 200 community bankers and associate members gathered for three days of networking, learning, and celebrating community banking.

The first day kicked off with the annual Golf Scramble at the beautiful Bully Pulpit Golf Course. The evening ended with the Exhibitor Theme Party.

The Convention continued on day two with educational speakers and information panels on a wide variety of topics pertaining to community banking. Day two ended with the Annual Banquet at the new Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library.

On the final day, the Convention with the Annual Prayer Breakfast and Annual Business Meeting.

Thank you to all of the Convention sponsors who made this week in Medora truly possible. Thank you to the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation and the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library for hosting. Lastly, thank you to everyone who traveled near and far to part take in this year's Annual Convention.

Save the date's for next year's 59th ICBND Annual Convention on September 20-22, 2027, in Medora.

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NELSON ASSUMES CHAIRMAN POSITION OF ICBND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ICBND is pleased to announce that Jordan Nelson of Peoples State Bank of Velva has assumed the position of Chairman of the ICBND Board of Directors at the 58th ICBND Annual Convention in Medora, North Dakota.

Nelson succeeds Sarah Getzlaff of Security First Bank of North Dakota, who served as Chairmwoman for the past year.

As Chairman, Nelson will help lead ICBND in its mission to advocate for and support North Dakota's community banks while working alongside fellow board members to address issues impacting the state's community banking industry.

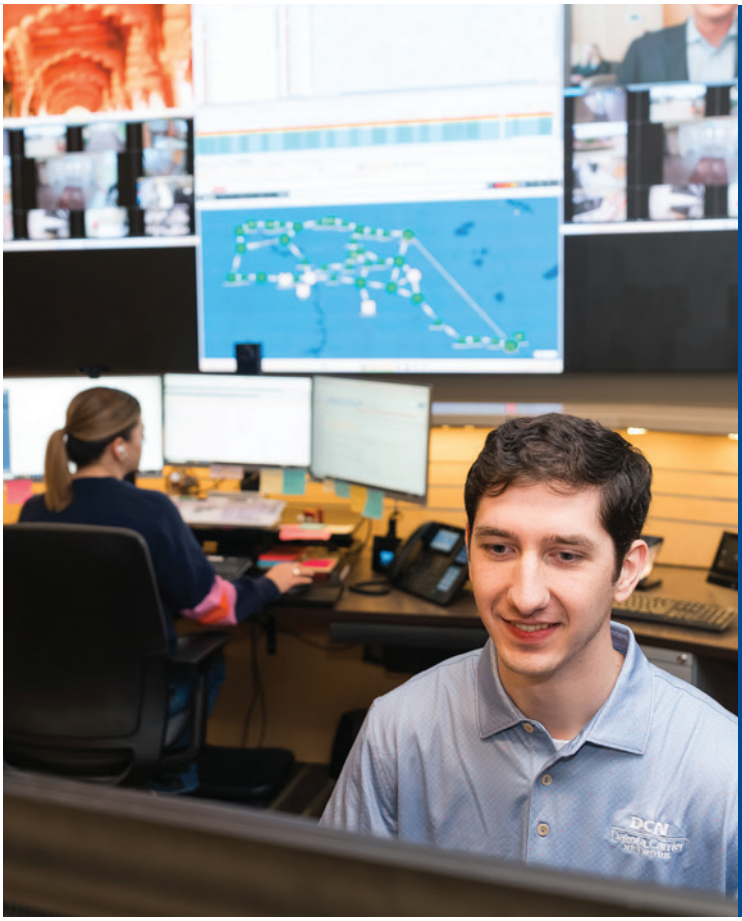
ICBND also extends its heartfelt appreciation to Getzlaff for her service as Chairwoman and her dedication to advancing the interests of North Dakota's independent community banks.



JORDAN NELSON
Peoples State Bank of Velva



SARAH GETZLAFF
Security First Bank of North Dakota



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ICBND WELCOMES HANSON, BENSON AND LIVINGSTON TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ICBND was pleased to welcome David Hanson of American State Bank & Trust, Jersey Benson of First Western Bank, and Jamie Livingston of State Bank & Trust of Kenmare to the Board of Directors at the 58th ICBND Annual Convention in Medora, North Dakota.

Hanson will serve as Western Director while Bensen will serve as a Director at Large. Livingston will be the new Vice Chairman of the Board.

ICBND would like to thank Jason Johnson, First International Bank & Trust, Jared Bullinger of Bravera Bank, David Rogstad of Starion Bank for your time and leadership on the Board of Directors.

ICBND also thanks Brenda Foster, ICBA Federal Delegate for her service. Foster's term as Federal Delegate will expire in March 2027.

Check out the entire Board of Directors online at https://www.icbnd.com/board-of-directors.



DAVID HANSON
American State Bank & Trust



JERSEY BENSON
First Western Bank



JAMIE LIVINGSTON
State Bank & Trust of Kenmare



JASON JOHNSON
First International Bank & Trust



JARED BULLINGER
Bravera Bank



BRENDA FOSTER
First Western Bank



DAVID ROGSTAD
Starion Bank



Supporting those who help North Dakota move forward

Strong communities start with healthy people. That's why Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota connects you to 99% of doctors and 100% of hospitals statewide.

CARRY BLUE. CARRY ON.

AI: A CAUTIONARY TALE OF OPPORTUNITY

If you read my column last month, you know that I see a lot of potential for artificial intelligence (AI) to support community banks in efficiencies and new solutions. But AI also brings with it the power for fraudsters to inflict greater harm.

Each day, news items point to deepfakes and scams preying on people's fears with realistic voices and images, and while we'rebattling a resurgence in "old school" check fraud, we're also working to circumvent these more sophisticated digital attacks.

That's why preparedness is key. Recently, ICBA released the Community Banker AI Security Readiness Guide (icba.org/ai) to assess the AI threat shift, what it means for local institutions, and how to strengthen third-party due diligence, update and test incident response plans, and more. This guide helps community banks address emerging threats proactively, so you can shore up defenses.

As with any fraud, information sharing between community bankers will be critical to thwarting attacks. ICBA convened an AI Task Force for this very reason. Working together, the task force has a goal of providing practical guidance for community bankers in mitigating AI-related risks and will continue to publish resources that speak to the threat environment.

In addition, ICBA Community (community.icba.org) offers a platform for sharing information, helping community bankers alert one another to emerging issues as they arise.

But addressing AI fraud will require more than what we do as individual bankers; it will take policies that understand and speak to what we face. To that end, ICBA continues to advocate for balanced AI policies. For instance, we led development of a Joint AI Action Plan that urges immediate federal action to prepare for a new era of AI-enabled cybersecurity risk. We also submitted a statement for the record for a Senate Banking Committee hearing urging senators to recognize the critical role community banks play as new AI policies are created. And we will continue to work to ensure legislators understand the effects AI fraud will have on our customers and communities.

While it brings with it much potential, AI is a cautionary tale of the double-edged sword of technology. Fortunately for community bankers, we benefit from this community of community bankers who look out for one another. There is strength in that connectedness, ensuring we have the opportunity to both address the threats that lie ahead and apply AI technologies to support the future of community banking.



REBECA ROMERO RAINEY
ICBA President and CEO

Rebeca Romero Rainey is President & CEO of the Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA), the leading advocacy organization exclusively representing community banks.



ALICE P. FRAZIER
ICBA Chair

BOLSTERING CYBERSECURITY THROUGH YOUR TEAM, TRAINING AND TOOLS

Cyberattacks top the list of concerns for every community bank CEO. No matter the parameters we put in place, there are always new data breaches and schemes that keep us up at night. Fortunately, having the right mix of technology and talent in place can make a huge difference in our resilience against these attacks.

PEOPLE-FIRST SOLUTIONS

Strong cybersecurity starts with having knowledgeable staff you can trust to build and maintain the most current systems possible and to properly allocate enough resources to protect your environment.

And while the responsibility for cybersecurity starts at the top, to be successful, the full organization needs to make it a priority. Our chief information officer regularly points out that the most important thing we do is train our team. By giving them credentials to access our systems, our employees have the keys to the kingdom, and there are no fail-proof safeguards to prevent improper use.

So, by partnering with the right providers, we can regularly test our prowess against cyberthreats, and if we fail, we earn additional training. We move in this continuous cycle of test, train, test, to remain constantly vigilant against emerging dangers.

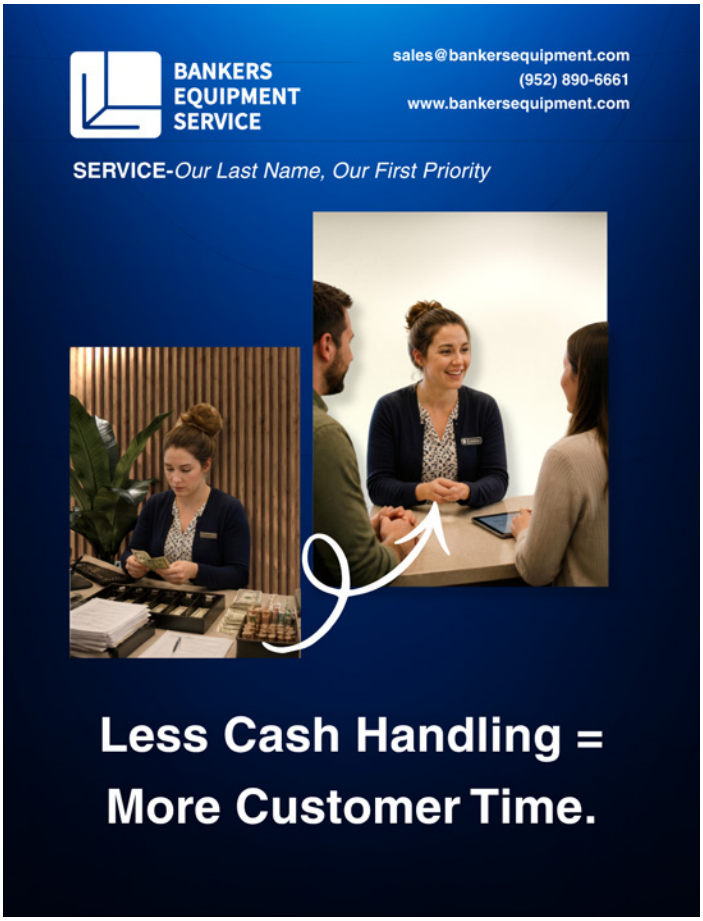
A LAYERED APPROACH

People alone do not make up a cyber defense. Cybersecurity needs to be a layered approach. It is not just having knowledgeable and vigilant staff; community banks also must have the best equipment and rules to prevent problems, access controls, ongoing training, network segmentation, antivirus protections and 24/7 monitoring. This multi-pronged method ensures we are doing everything in our power to protect our banks and customers.

Appropriate risk management is the key to success. Fortunately, our technology partners are responsive, improving their solutions to detect additional types of fraud. Network and security services providers deliver timely alerts and reporting to ensure that we have the safest configuration possible. We can also turn to ICBA through its ThinkTECH Accelerator, Preferred Service Providers and Corporate Members to identify vetted solutions as we need to bolster our cybersecurity platforms.

Ultimately, cybersecurity centers on having the right team, training and tools in place, and that layered approach will serve as our biggest defense. Knowing we have set up the right safeguards with continuous checks for chinks in our armor, we can sleep a little better at night.

Alice P. Frazier is president and CEO of Potomac Bank in Charles Town, West Virginia.



INNOVATION STATION: MIDDLEWARE'S

Community banks have always had a great deal of dependency on their cores to run the general ledger, keep a record of transactions, reconcile daily activity and so much more, but truth be told, that foundational technology is 40 years old. Core providers recognize that to help community banks capitalize on modern solutions, they need to evolve how their infrastructure meets customer needs.

Over the past five-plus years, we've seen a shift in how cores engage, creating more open interfaces, application programming interfaces (APIs) and modular architectures that let banks preserve the core as the trusted system of record while bringing in specialized capabilities from a broader ecosystem, such as fraud tools, digital-account opening, treasury, lending, data intelligence and payments. That dynamic has shifted the environment, allowing community banks to evolve how they safely orchestrate this capability into a more integrated customer experience.

ENTER MIDDLEWARE

Thanks to this more open state of play, core connectivity is no longer synonymous with building a separate, direct integration from every solutions provider. Middleware now offers an abstraction layer: It standardizes data, workflows, security controls and connectivity between the core and multiple external applications.

In short, middleware allows us to open the aperture for what's possible. Today's products do not necessarily require core integrations; they have capabilities to leverage a flat file of core data. That shift equals cost savings and efficiencies for community banks who can now build an integration once at the middleware layer and reuse it across use cases.

API-led middleware bridges legacy systems and customer-facing or third-party applications, reduces dependency on the legacy core, and supports reusable access to data.

THE PATH TO MODERNIZATION

In this new paradigm, core providers continue to impart significant value by delivering a regulated transaction engine, reliability and operational scale. But now, they also can be modernized without a full-blown overhaul.

So, while core replacement is not required for system modernization, community banks do need to be intentional in identifying the customer or operational journeys that matter most, establishing a reusable connectivity and data layer, and choosing partners who meet security, resilience, compliance and commercial requirements.

The future is not core versus fintech; it lies in a well-governed ecosystem where the core is the foundation, fintechs contribute differentiated capabilities, middleware helps coordinate the environment, and the community bank remains firmly in control of strategy, risk and the all-important customer relationship.

Modernizing bank offerings now comes down to thinking less about buying a platform and more about how to create a technology stack with a capacity for change. Because one thing is certain: Financial services are changing, and community banks need to continue to evolve to ensure their place in the future of banking.



WAYNE MILLER
Executive Vice President,
Chief Innovation Officer

ICBA

Wayne Miller is executive vice president and chief innovation officer at ICBA.



DANA SPARKMAN
The Baker Group

INFRASTRUCTURE NECESSITY OR CREDIT WARNING SIGN?

Municipal bond issuance is on pace for a third consecutive record year, with dealers forecasting roughly $600 billion of new supply in 2026 after 2025's record of about $580 billion.

For municipal bondholders, the question is not whether the market can absorb the supply—so far, it has. Rather, the question is whether the debt being issued to fund this infrastructure wave is being taken on prudently at the issuer level or if it's quietly eroding the credit cushion that underpins the municipal market's safe reputation, built on extremely low default rates and the security of taxing power and essential services.

WHY MUNICIPAL DEBT LEVEL IS RISING

As demonstrated in the chart at right, aggregate municipal debt outstanding has shrunk roughly 16% since 2005 in inflation-adjusted terms, even as GDP, state and local tax revenue, and personal income all grew by 38% or more. However, several forces are compounding at once to push both debt levels and debt service costs higher.

First, aging infrastructure needs to be replaced. The American Society of Civil Engineers' latest report card shows the national infrastructure funding gap widening to $3.7 trillion, up from $2.6 trillion four years ago.

Second, demand for additional infrastructure is adding to that burden. For example, public power utilities are raising capital to meet AI-driven data center load, population migration necessitates more capital investment in some areas like Texas and Florida, and physical mitigants to manage climate risk are increasingly important.

Meanwhile, the federal support that let issuers avoid debt in recent years is fading. Pandemic-era stimulus that funded pay-as-you-go capital projects has run out, leading to a larger proportion of capital projects that will need to be funded with bond proceeds. Timing compounds the problem as both construction costs and borrowing rates are elevated. Many issuers delayed projects as interest rates rose, expecting a pullback that never fully came, and are now financing those same plans at rates well above what they could have locked in a few years earlier. At the same time, inflation has caused construction costs to increase rapidly, making these projects much more expensive.

That said, higher debt isn't inherently a problem for every issuer. Many municipalities are currently well positioned with high reserves, strong revenue sources and conservative budgeting practices, but there are also legitimate needs for increasing leverage. However, risk arises from debt and associated costs outpacing an issuer's capacity to manage them, particularly if additional capital needs keep surfacing while revenue and reserve growth slows or reverses.

Turning Regulations into **Plain English**

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Ryan Bakke, CPA
Financial Institutions Industry Leader
ryan.bakke@bradymartz.com
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Below are some credit indicators to help manage that risk.

CREDIT INDICATORS TO MONITOR

- Debt-load metrics: Materially rising debt per capita and debt/assessed ratios signal a tax base that's being asked to support more debt without a commensurate increase in capacity. Overlapping debt is also enlightening, as a taxpayer inside overlapping jurisdictions can carry a much heavier load than any single issuer's balance sheet suggests.
- Reserve erosion relative to debt service: Watch the general fund balance relative to annual debt service and whether the issuer is drawing down reserves to cover recurring operating costs rather than one-time items.
- Taxpayer concentration: If a small number of taxpayers account for a large share of assessed value, the credit is more fragile than the aggregate numbers imply. The departure or downsizing of one large employer or taxpayer can move the tax base materially.
- Tax collection rate: A decreasing collection rate is an important distress signal. It reflects real-time taxpayer stress and local administrative capacity to enforce collections.
- Disclosure and administrative behavior: Late or missing continuing disclosure filings, delayed audits or qualified/adverse audit opinions tend to correlate with weaker management generally. Noncompliance itself can raise an issuer's cost of funds independent of the underlying credit.
- Low or falling coverage ratio on revenue bonds: An issuer that repeatedly issues new parity debt against the same revenue stream dilutes its debt coverage. A low coverage ratio leaves less cushion to absorb a revenue shortfall before payment is at risk.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Infrastructure investment is genuinely needed, and the municipal bond market remains a proven avenue to fund it with historically solid credit quality. The recent pickup in issuance appears to be normalization of debt levels, but investors should stay vigilant.

Debt raised against durable, well-supported revenue is different than debt raised against optimistic assumptions or by issuers already in a fragile financial state. Instead of evaluating a debt increase in isolation, investors should comprehensively analyze the issuer's ability to sustainably carry the additional debt. The Baker Group's credit analysts are available to help you apply this framework to specific issuers in your portfolio.





LINDSAY LANORE
Senior Executive Vice President, Chief Learning & Experience Officer

ICBA

Lindsay LaNore is senior executive vice president and chief learning and experience officer for ICBA.

FUTURE-BACK THINKING: MAPPING OUT YOUR FUTURE STATE

What does the future hold? Obviously, it's impossible to know, but it is possible to define your desired future state. And it's also possible to create a roadmap for how to get there. Where is the bank right now, where does it need to be, and what is the route in between? One of the most powerful strategic exercises a leadership team or department can undertake is a future-state activity.

Rather than beginning with current challenges and working forward, this approach asks teams to imagine a successful future and work backward to determine how they got there. What makes this exercise unique is that it's flipped, and that offers the opportunity for significant conversations.

Start by painting a vivid picture of your bank (or department) one, three or five years from now. Imagine that it has achieved its most important goals. Write a scenario that outlines what success looks like, how employees are working differently, how customers are experiencing your bank, what outcomes have been achieved and more.

Once the future state is clearly defined, gather your team, set aside a few hours, grab a whiteboard, sticky notes or digital board and get to work. Here are four simple steps to follow:

1. Brainstorm what changed. Ask the team what changed between your current state and the future-state scenario. How did the bank deliver products or services differently? How did the bank connect with customers differently? Ask them, as a team, to identify the critical moments, decisions and innovations that drove this success. Be as creative as you can with your answers, encouraging outside-the-box thinking.
2. Prioritize and sequence. Not every change can happen at once. Identify what must occur in the next six months, next year and in later phases. This helps transform an inspiring vision into a practical roadmap.
3. Identify enablers and barriers. For each major change, discuss what would help make it happen and what could stand in its way. Consider resources, skills, leadership decisions, capacity constraints and competing priorities. Separate what your team can control from what may require support from others. Decide what to tackle first and what to leave until later.
4. Challenge yourselves to think bigger. Ask difficult questions. What's the boldest opportunity on the list? What should you stop doing now to create space for something new in the future? What assumptions are holding you back?

The real value of this exercise is the conversations it creates. Future-back thinking allows teams to think and talk about what is truly possible. The future rarely arrives exactly as expected. But banks or teams that intentionally define where they want to go are far better positioned to adapt, innovate and thrive than those simply reacting to what comes next.



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BRIAN LAVERDURE
Senior Vice President, Digital Assets & Innovation Policy

Brian Laverdure is ICBA's senior vice president of digital assets and innovation policy.

THE GENIUS ACT, ONE YEAR LATER

More than a year has passed since the Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for U.S. Stablecoins (GENIUS) Act created the nation's first federal regulatory structure for payment stablecoins. Since then, federal banking agencies and the Treasury Department have been writing the rules that will determine how the law operates and what it means for community banks.

The GENIUS Act governs payment stablecoins: digital assets intended to maintain a one-to-one value with the U.S. dollar and function as a means of payment. The law limits its issuance to permitted entities and requires issuers to maintain reserves made up of specified liquid assets; provide redemption rights; and meet disclosure, audit, risk management and compliance requirements.

The law addresses some core requirements, but regulators are now developing the specific standards for federal and state oversight, issuer compliance and bank participation in stablecoin issuance, custody and related services. That process is still underway, giving community banks a chance to weigh in before the rules are finalized.

Community banks have a direct stake in developing the regulatory framework for payment stablecoins. The regulations could affect deposits, payments, liquidity and competition across the banking industry, so it is important that community bankers tell regulators how the proposals could affect institutions of different sizes and business models.

KEY QUESTIONS REMAIN

July 18 marked both the first anniversary of President Trump signing the GENIUS Act into law and the statutory deadline for federal regulators to complete their rulemaking. The agencies missed that deadline, and several proposals and final rules were still pending as of mid-August.

ICBA and 44 state banking associations used the anniversary to press federal regulators on the issues that will affect community banks the most throughout implementation. In a July letter, they raised concerns about the pace of the rulemaking, coordination among the agencies and the risk that stablecoins that pay yield could draw deposits away from community banks.

The letter urged regulators to align their rules and close gaps that could allow stablecoin issuers or their affiliates to get around the law's prohibition on paying yield. It also called for strong capital, liquidity and risk management requirements, and comparable standards for nonbank issuers and their parent companies when they perform bank-like functions.

RISKS POSED BY STABLECOIN YIELD

The deposit issue is especially important for community banks. ICBA research estimates that yield-bearing payment stablecoins could drain $1.3 trillion in bank deposits and reduce lending by about $850 billion. Community banks rely on those deposits to fund loans for small businesses, farms, households and rural communities.

Stablecoins that pay yield raise the threat of deposit flight by incentivizing consumers and businesses to move their funds out of loan-making community banks and into stablecoin. In the letter, ICBA asked regulators to prevent issuers and affiliated companies from using rewards, incentives or other arrangements to evade yield restrictions.

As stablecoins become more connected to the banking and payments systems, problems at one issuer could spread well beyond the crypto sector. For these reasons, ICBA and the state associations also urged regulators to address run risk, payment system failures, and contagion between crypto firms and regulated financial institutions.

THE CLARITY ACT RAISES THE STAKES

The potential loss of deposits and lending described above is also driving ICBA's position on the Clarity Act, in addition to the GENIUS Act rulemaking.

The Clarity Act would establish federal rules for digital assets and divide oversight between the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. One of the biggest remaining disputes involves stablecoin yield, interest or rewards. The GENIUS Act prohibits issuers from paying yield or interest, and we're pressing Congress to extend that prohibition to crypto exchanges and other third parties.

Continued from Page 16.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Right now, two major questions remain unanswered: When will regulators complete the GENIUS Act rules, and what will Congress do with the Clarity Act? The answers will have lasting implications for banking and payments, making both developments important for community bankers to follow.

To stay engaged, community bankers can stay tuned to ICBA's NewsWatch Today newsletter and advocacy alerts on further developments with GENIUS Act rulemakings and the Clarity Act in Congress. We've encouraged state associations and community bankers to submit comments on several rulemakings, and we expect more opportunities for members to explain how proposed requirements could affect their institutions, customers and communities.

Community bankers can also visit mainstreetovercrypto.com to engage on this issue and leverage ICBA's Crypto Contrast Campaign. The campaign is a targeted effort aimed at policymakers and other decision-makers shaping digital assets policy, and it has generated more than 5.7 million impressions, 5 million video views and significant media exposure. The campaign equips community bankers with research and advocacy resources, including the Stablecoin Impact Map and other tools designed to help members strengthen their own outreach and engagement with policymakers on this important issue.

Given the seismic potential impact of these policymaking developments, ICBA and community bankers must continue working together to ensure our industry and the local communities we serve are heard loud and clear in Washington.

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COMMUNITY BANKERS FOR COMPLIANCE



FALL SESSION - OCTOBER 20-21

PRESENTER
Veronica Madsen, CAMS, CRCM
Veronica is a seasoned consultant with a robust legal background and decades of banking industry experience. Her career began at the Michigan Credit Union League trade association, followed by roles as a Regulatory Attorney, Chief Compliance Officer at a fintech company, and fonder of ESTEE Compliance, where she provided comprehensive compliance services. Veronica has also created and managed a Compliance Management System at a fintech company and overseen the Bank Secrecy Act training program at a large bank. She holds a Bachelor of Science in English and Communication from Central Michigan University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. She is also a Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist (CAMS) and a Certified Regulatory Compliance Manager (CRCM).



DAY 1 - OCTOBER 20, 2026
Subject Topics

Auditing the Closing Disclosurers.

DAY 2 - OCTOBER 21, 2026
Subject Topics
Finance Charge and its Implications

- What is and is not a finance charge.
- Impacts on the bank's lending (HPML, HCL, QM)
- Service member Issues
- Service members Civil Relief Act
- Military Lending Act

REGISTER TODAY

WWW.ICBND.COM

MIDWEST AG SUMMIT



AGENDA
9:00am - 9:05am | Welcome

9:05am - 9:20am
Kent Thiese, Farm Management Analyst
"Ag View from the ground level"

9:20am - 9:40am
David Oppedahl, Policy Advisor,
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
"A View of the Farm Economy from Above"

9:40am - 10:00am
Faith Parum, PhD, American Farm Bureau Federation

10:00am - 10:20am
Lynn Paulson, SVP/Director of Agribusiness Development, Bell Bank

10:20am - 11:00am
Round Table, Moderated by Kent Thiese with David Oppedahl, Lynn Paulson and Faith Parum

11:00am | Wrap Up

MIDWEST VIRTUAL AG CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 19, 2026
9:00AM – 11:00AM CST

What's happening in agriculture directly affects the customers and communities that banks serve.

Join us for the Virtual Ag Conference on November 19 for a closer look at today's ag economy and the issues community bankers should be watching in the months ahead.

Hear perspectives from the farm level, the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Bell Bank and the American Farm Bureau Federation, followed by a roundtable discussion.

REGISTER TODAY!

www.icbnd.com



LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE FALL SESSION

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2026

Join us for the Fall Session of the Leadership Exchange. Both Lead Forward and Emerging Leader groups will convene for two days of learning, networking and growth.

AGENDA

NOVEMBER 3, 2026

6:30pm – Welcome Dinner at The Craftcade
(405 N 4th Street, Bismarck, ND 58501)
Enjoy NY-style pizza, retro games, craft beer and more at The Craftcade in downtown Bismarck.

NOVEMBER 4, 2026

9:00am - 10:00am – Education Session at ICBND Office
(1136 W Divide Ave, Bismarck, ND 58501)

Kelly Hoeven, BradyMartz
"Advocacy: Elevate Your Communication & Public Speaking"
Great advocates know how to make their message clear, compelling, and memorable. This interactive session will help bankers build confidence in public speaking, communicate more effectively with key audiences, and tell the community banking story in a way that connects. Participants will leave with practical tools they can use the next time they are called on to speak, advocate, or represent their bank.

10:00am - 11:00am – Education Session at ICBND Office
(1136 W Divide Ave, Bismarck, ND 58501)

Rich Garman, ND Department of Commerce
The North Dakota Department of Commerce leads the state's efforts to attract, retain and expand economic wealth. Charged with coordinating and focusing the state's economic development resources, the business development team works closely with national and local partners to accomplish that task. Business incentives, government accessibility, and workforce performance, combined with North Dakota's favorable position as one of the lowest cost states for operating a business, are driving top companies to establish operations in North Dakota. The Economic Development and Finance division provides full service site location, incentive packaging and business liaison assistance.

11:00am - 11:45am – Education Session at ICBND Office
(1136 W Divide Ave, Bismarck, ND 58501)

Chris Masse, Lewis & Clark Development Group
The Lewis & Clark Development Group is a collaboration of three separate non-profit organizations, Lewis & Clark Regional Development Council (LCRDC), the Lewis & Clark Certified Development Company (LCCDC), and CommunityWorks North Dakota (CWND), joined to provide programs and loans to support businesses, local governments, and individuals in expanding affordable housing opportunities and advancing economic and community development across North Dakota.

11:45am - 12:15pm – Lunch

12:30pm - 3:00pm – Tour of RoughRider Industries (RRI) at the ND State Penitentiary
(3303 E Main Ave, Bismarck, ND 58501)
Since 1975, Rough Rider Industries has worked to make top-quality goods and services while giving people a second chance. RRI is a division of the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. They train and employ individuals in state care so they can learn real skills and return to life ready to succeed.

RRI runs shops in three state sites:
- *North Dakota State Penitentiary (Bismarck): They build furniture, seats, signs, plates, dumpsters, park gear, and custom metal work.*
- *James River correctional Center (Jamestown): They make clothes, bedding, pillows, seats, and plastic bags. We also run commissary services.*
- *Missouri River Correctional Center (Bismarck): They focus on welding and custom farm gear.*





HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS
Hampton Inn & Suites
2020 Schafer Street, Bismarck
701-751-5656 | Ask for ICBND Block

October 2026 Webinars

Embrace your emotional health with a live webinar led by Learn to Live's clinical team.

The Price of Silence: How to Talk About Your Mental Health: If you are struggling with anxiety, depression, or a related concern, you know that is when you feel the least like discussing what you are going through. Join us as we discuss effective strategies, guidance in seeking help, and ways we can support those close to us who may be struggling. *World Mental Health Day (October 10th*)

Friday, October 9th: 11-11:30am CT/12-12:30pm ET

Public Speaking: What to Do When the Spotlight's on You: Does the thought of stepping up to the podium make your heart race? Whether it's presenting in front of a crowd or just speaking up in a small meeting - the fear of public speaking is such a common human experience. In this webinar, the Learn to Live Clinical Team will discuss why you may fear public speaking and equip you with powerful tools to communicate in the spotlight without getting pushed around by fear.

Tuesday, October 13th: 12-12:30pm CT/1-1:30pm ET

Finding Hope and Healing in the Face of Trauma: Hard things happen in life and sometimes, when we get knocked down, it's harder to get back on our feet than we would like. We'll explain the commonly used terms 'trauma' and 'PTSD' and how they impact our lives. The Preparation and Growth Model will be introduced, and we'll share important steps for healing in the face of trauma and strategies to build resilience should challenges come your way. *World Trauma Day (October 17th)*

Friday, October 16th: 12-12:30pm CT/1-1:30pm ET

NEW **Conquering Financial Stress: Proven Tools for Resilience:** Financial stress isn't just a money problem. From our sleep and relationships to our ability to think clearly and solve problems, financial concerns can significantly interfere with our mental and emotional health. In this webinar, our clinical team will explore the psychological challenges that can arise from difficult financial situations and how we can take advantage of Learn to Live's online programs to overcome pressing concerns and develop powerful coping skills for the future.

Friday, October 23rd: 11-11:30am CT/12-12:30pm ET

To Register:
Click the link for the webinar of your choice and use the access code **BLUEND**.
Upon registering, you will receive a confirmation email from Zoom.

If you cannot attend a live session, you can still register to receive a link to the recording.

BlueElements

*Monthly well*ness materials are part of a comprehensive health and wellness platform, BlueElements.

ND BANKS BENEFIT TRUST

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

Learn to Live, Inc. is an independent company offering online tools and programs for behavioral health support on behalf of BCBSND.

BND-24-0709480 • 9-26

Upcoming
Webinar Schedule

October 2026	DATE	TIME
Active Shooter Training: REACT ESCAPE SURVIVE	Tue 10/13	10:00 AM CDT
Understanding Call Report Regulatory Capital	Thu 10/15	10:00 AM CDT
When a Borrower Dies: Next Steps	Mon 10/19	10:00 AM CDT
Fair Lending Risks in AI-Driven Credit Decisions: Bias by Algorithm	Tue 10/20	10:00 AM CDT
Exploding Check Fraud	Wed 10/21	10:00 AM CDT
The Advent of Roth SEPs & SIMPLEs: Options, Choices & Considerations	Thu 10/22	10:00 AM CDT
IRA Required Statements & Reports	Tue 10/27	10:00 AM CDT
Conducting a BSA Audit	Wed 10/28	10:00 AM CDT
Lending to Specific Industries: Trades, Hospitality, Nonprofits & Professional Services Firms	Thu 10/29	10:00 AM CDT

November 2026	DATE	TIME
Countdown to New FDIC Signage Effective January 1, 2027	Mon 11/02	10:00 AM CST
A Year in the Life of a Compliance Officer	Tue 11/03	10:00 AM CST
Deposit Operations Update	Wed 11/04	10:00 AM CST
Collecting & Communicating with Troubled Borrowers Before It's Too Late	Thu 11/05	10:00 AM CST
Traditional IRA Discretionary & Required Minimum Distributions	Tue 11/10	10:00 AM CST
Elder Exploitation: Prevention Tips, Tools & Internal Controls	Thu 11/12	10:00 AM CST
Robbery Prevention & Response: Beyond the Basics	Mon 11/16	10:00 AM CST
Unpacking E-SIGN: Consent Process, Risks & Compliance	Tue 11/17	10:00 AM CST
Opening Trusts & Other Fiduciary Accounts	Wed 11/18	10:00 AM CST
Developing Effective Fraud Response Procedures	Thu 11/19	10:00 AM CST
The CTR Line-by-Line	Tue 11/24	10:00 AM CST
Opening Business Accounts: The Big Four	Wed 11/25	10:00 AM CST

December 2026	DATE	TIME
Are Overdraft Programs OK Again?	Tue 12/01	10:00 AM CST
BSA Officer & Staff Year-End Wrap-Up	Wed 12/02	10:00 AM CST
Managing the Repossession Process	Thu 12/03	10:00 AM CST

SCAN TO REGISTER TODAY

Community Bankers Webinar Network (Powered by FinEd) partners with community bankers associations throughout the country to deliver quality webinar training for bankers in all 50 states. The synergy of these relationships allows us to successfully deliver more than 200 live and on-demand webinars, with more being added throughout the year.

USDA IMPROVES ACCESS TO CREDIT BY STREAMLINING AND MODERNIZING FARM LOANS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is improving access to credit for farmers and ranchers by making farm loan policy and technology improvements, reducing administrative burdens and strengthening financial security. These updates will increase efficiency by expediting the application process for direct loans, streamlining the process for certain guaranteed lenders who partner with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and laying the groundwork for an electronic interface for guaranteed loans.

"One of the biggest challenges farmers and ranchers face is access to capital," said Under Secretary Richard Fordyce. "The Trump administration is putting Farmers First by streamlining and modernizing the loan making process to get much-needed capital into the hands of farmers and ranchers who work so hard to build and preserve their legacy for generations to come. We've seen historic demand for farm loans over the last two years, demonstrating the importance of accessible, affordable credit for America's farmers and ranchers."

FSA makes direct and guaranteed loans to farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain sufficient commercial credit at reasonable rates and terms. FSA farm loans can be used to purchase personal property or farmland, finance agricultural production expenses, or address day-to-day operational needs. The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act authorizes most farm loans including farm ownership, farm operating, and emergency loans.

FAST TRACKING DIRECT LOAN APPLICATIONS

Following a successful pilot program, FSA is permanently implementing the Application Fast Track (AFT) process to expedite the loan application and approval process for low-risk direct loan applicants. AFT expedites the underwriting process for direct loan applicants who are least likely to default on their loans based on financial benchmarks and historical repayment data.

Since the pilot started in 2023, an average of 23% of direct loan customers qualified for the streamlined process, which decreased the application processing time by approximately eight calendar days. This resulted in improved access to credit for borrowers and increased efficiency for FSA staff.

AFT is currently available to all qualifying producers nationwide, and these changes simply transition AFT from a pilot program into a permanent part of FSA's regulations and policies. In addition to AFT, FSA is also making several changes to the direct loan collateral valuation process, which will expedite loan closings.

STREAMLINING FOR PREFERRED LENDERS

FSA partners with credit unions, commercial banks, and farm credit organizations to deliver Guaranteed Loans, which help borrowers who cannot secure credit without a federal guarantee. Through Guaranteed Loans, the financial institution makes the loan, but FSA guarantees the farm loan against possible financial loss, reducing the lender's risk.

FSA is further streamlining the process for lenders in the Preferred Lender Program, which includes the most experienced and highest-performing lending institutions. These lenders will have delegated authority to certify that applicants meet FSA lending requirements for creditworthiness, financial feasibility, and adequacy of collateral in place of a more detailed agency review. This streamlined process reduces documentation requirements and expedites loan processing. Preferred lenders will receive more information and guidance on exercising delegated authority in the new electronic system before it goes live in early 2027. However, preferred lenders can begin exercising delegated authority through traditional loan narratives starting Oct. 1, 2026.

GUARANTEED LOAN MODERNIZATION

USDA is modernizing outdated technology systems with the goal of expediting loan delivery. This multi-year effort will begin with the guaranteed loan program and later extend to all loan types.

The new modernized system will allow guaranteed loan applications, lender notifications and supporting documents to be electronically submitted, replacing the agency's largely paper-based process. Paper applications will still be accepted, and FSA will provide notifications consistent with the submission method.

FSA is making regulatory changes ahead of implementing the new modernized system and will provide more information and training for guaranteed lenders before transitioning to the electronic interface in early 2027.

BANK OF NORTH DAKOTA LAUNCHES ROUGHRIDER COIN, CREDITS COLLABORATION AND CONTROLLED INNOVATION

Bank of North Dakota (BND) announced the successful launch of Roughrider Coin, a U.S. dollar-backed, tokenized digital asset that modernizes interbank payments for community banks and credit unions across the state. Developed for regulated institutions and integrated with existing payment operations, Roughrider Coin enables secure, near real-time settlement for routine bank-to-bank transactions.

"Roughrider Coin reflects the strength of North Dakota's financial community working together," said Don Morgan, BND President and CEO. "Four of our state's financial institutions partnered with BND to validate the use case, and our collaboration with Fiserv, VersaBank USA and Solana provided the proven technology to bring this infrastructure online.

Participating financial institutions emphasized both the practical benefits and the value of collaboration. Peter Stenehjem, CEO of First International Bank & Trust, noted that the pilot builds on the bank's 2018 acquisition of Kotapay and readiness for emerging technologies. "Our participation in Roughrider Coin allows us to stay at the forefront of innovation, thoughtfully evaluate and manage emerging risks, and gain valuable experience alongside our longtime partners at BND and financial institutions across North Dakota. Roughrider Coin represents an additional payment rail that can support future use cases where blockchain technology delivers meaningful value."

The pilot was delivered with support from trusted technology partners: Fiserv provided the digital asset platform and banking integration; VersaBank USA supported regulated custody and issuance for fiat-backed digital assets; and Solana supplied the high-performance blockchain infrastructure that underpins permissioned operations. Together, these capabilities validated the speed, security, auditability and bank-grade controls.

For Capital Credit Union, the initiative aligns with member-focused modernization. "Our members' expectations continue to evolve, and as a credit union we have to evolve with them," said Jon Griffin, CEO. "Roughrider Coin gives us an opportunity to explore emerging payment technology in a practical and responsible way while continuing to focus on what matters most, serving our members. What makes this initiative unique is the partnership behind it. BND has invested significant time, resources, and expertise to make this possible for community financial institutions across the state. Their transparent and thoughtful approach has allowed us to better understand the technology and gain confidence as we prepare for the future of payments."

North Dakota is among the first U.S. states to operationalize a dollar-backed stablecoin for financial institutions, within a defined governance and compliance framework.

At Gate City Bank, Executive Vice President and CIO Ryan Goellner underscored the importance of a bank-governed, controlled environment. "We were attracted to the fact that this is a bank-governed program operating within a controlled network of approved financial institutions rather than an open cryptocurrency environment," he said. "The program includes defined governance, compliance, screening, approval and oversight processes, and participation is limited to approved institutions and users. As a regulated financial institution, we believe it is important to thoughtfully evaluate innovations that may benefit customers and communities while maintaining strong governance, risk management and regulatory compliance. This pilot allows us to do that in a measured and responsible way."

Utilization of Roughrider Coin is voluntary, and is available to all of the state's financial institutions. Expanding access will occur in phases to support onboarding and user experience.

"Theodore Roosevelt once said, 'The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena.' North Star is proud to have been in the arena alongside BND from the earliest stages of testing Roughrider Coin," said Bob Herrington, President and CEO. "This successful rollout demonstrates what can happen when community financial institutions embrace innovation together. Roughrider Coin represents an important step toward faster, more efficient payments while preserving the strength and trusted relationships that make North Dakota's financial institutions unique."

ICBA COMPENSATION & BENEFITS REPORT

Community banks are planning for 2027, and reliable compensation and benefits data can help them recruit effectively, retain valued employees, and remain competitive.

SCAN FOR BENEFITS REPORT

ICBA is asking for your help in sharing the 2026 ICBA Compensation & Benefits Report and Dashboard is now available for purchase to bankers in your state.

The report helps banks take the guesswork out of workforce planning with:

- An interactive dashboard featuring more than 100 compensation and benefits metrics.
- Compensation data for more than 246 full-time roles and 30 part-time roles.
- Data that can be explored to identify trends most relevant to a bank's workforce strategy.
- A complimentary 15-minute webinar on how to get the most value from the dashboard.

Help ICBA share this valuable resource with community bankers in your state. Discounts are available for ICBA Members (applied at checkout).

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BIC® Intensity® Clic™ Gel Pen

Ultra-smooth, fraud-resistant gel ink they'll reach for every day.



- Users rave about this retractable pen with its ultra-smooth, fine-point gel roller that glides across paper.
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Contact Lacey or Jess for more information at 701-258-8748 or laceyk@icbnd.com.

ICB MARKETING SOLUTIONS

Limited Time Offer – Expires December 31st!

8TH ANNUAL VOLUNTEER DAYS SHOWCASES FIRST WESTERN BANK'S LEGACY OF SERVICE



First Western Bank employees will trade their usual workday responsibilities for opportunities to serve their communities during the bank's 8th Annual Volunteer Days, scheduled for October 5–9, 2026.

Throughout the week, their employees across North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Arizona will volunteer with local nonprofits, schools, and community organizations. The annual initiative is expected to generate more than 1,000 volunteer hours, with employees participating in projects that address a variety of community needs.

Volunteer efforts will range from assisting food banks and supporting local schools to improving public spaces and helping organizations that serve families and individuals in need. The weeklong event provides an opportunity for employees to connect with their communities outside of their daily banking responsibilities.

"Giving back has always been an important part of who we are at First Western Bank," said Brenda K. Foster, President & CEO of First Western Bank. "Volunteer Days is an opportunity for our employees to come together, support organizations doing meaningful work, and make a positive difference in the communities we call home."

PRAIRIE BUSINESS MAGAZINE RECOGNIZES ICBND MEMBERS AS TOP 50 BEST PLACES TO WORK

Congratulations to ICBND members, Brady Martz, First International Bank & Trust, and Starion Bank for recently being named Prairie Business Magazine's top 50 Best Places to Work.

Congratulations to these organizations for being recognized as great places to work. You can check out the entire list by scanning the QR code.

BRADY MARTZ

Headquarters: Grand Forks, N.D.
Number of employees: Approximately 450
Website: www.bradymartz.com

Founded in 1927, Brady Martz has been delivering exceptional client services for almost a century. Headquartered in Grand Forks, North Dakota, the firm operates in nine offices across North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Texas, offering advisory, audit and assurance and tax services to a diverse range of industries. As an independent firm, we credit the talent, integrity and professionalism of our team members with upholding our long-standing reputation for excellence. Our firm prides itself on being a fun and challenging place to build a career for those who are friendly, approachable and ready to make every day count.



FIRST INTERNATIONAL BANK & TRUST

Headquarters: Watford City, N.D.
Number of employees: 650
Website: FIBT.com

First International Bank & Trust (FIBT) is a family-owned community bank with a history dating back to 1910. With locations across North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Arizona, FIBT provides a full range of personal, business, agricultural and mortgage banking services. Guided by a relationship-based approach and a commitment to the communities it serves, FIBT helps customers pursue financial success through personalized solutions and exceptional service.

STARION BANK

Headquarters: Bismarck, N.D.
Number of employees: 225
Website: starionbank.com

The best organizations offer more than opportunity; they make people feel seen, supported and valued. That's the culture we've built at Starion Bank. Our teams invest in one another, in the customers they serve and in the communities they call home. It's a place where wins are celebrated and people genuinely want to see each other grow. When people feel connected to a larger purpose and the people around them, they do their best work. We're proud to be that place for each other, and for you.



STEINWAND NAMED BISMARCK MANDAN CHAMBER EDC'S 20 UNDER 40

Andrew Steinwand, the Bismarck Market President with Dacotah Bank was recently named the Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC's 20 Under 40.

Steinwand accepted this award at the Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC's Celebrate Bismarck-Mandan program in September.

You can read Andrew's profile and see all of the 20 Under 40 recepients online at https://issuu.com/bismarckmandanchamberconnection/docs/september_2026.

ANDREW STEINWAND, 29



Market President
DACOTAH BANK

I was born and raised in North Dakota, spending most of my life in the Bismarck-Mandan community. I graduated from North Dakota State University with a major in accounting and a minor in economics. Throughout college I knew I was interested in business but had no idea where that would lead me. I took an internship at the Bank of North Dakota, and the team helped me realize that banking might be a perfect fit where I could use the accounting and numbers part of my brain and couple it with genuine relationship building.

Following the internship, I became a Junior Commercial Lender and Credit Analyst at Bremer Bank in Fargo. My fiancé (now wife) was also born and raised in Bismarck, and we knew that we would like to find our way back to our hometown. A position eventually opened in Bismarck at Bremer which allowed us to move back.

After four years of commercial lending at Bremer, I was asked to be a part of the team to start a de novo branch for Dacotah Bank. The chance to build something from scratch that could have a lasting impact in the Bismarck Mandan community is truly a dream scenario as a banker with an entrepreneurial mindset. We opened the doors to Dacotah Bank in Bismarck in 2023 and I took on a leadership role as Market President in 2025.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU IN YOUR CAREER OR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT?

The driving force in everything that I do is my family. I was blessed to grow up in Bismarck with two parents who instilled in me that family comes first. With them leading by example, I experienced a wonderful childhood that resulted in a strong pride for our local community. I am motivated both professionally and through community involvement to give my children the upbringing that I experienced and pass down the pride that I have for our community.

WHAT'S A CHALLENGE YOU'VE FACED ON YOUR CAREER PATH, AND HOW DID YOU NAVIGATE IT?

The main challenge that I experienced in my career path were all the bumps and bruises that came with starting a de novo market from scratch. Most commercial lenders start at established institutions with brand recognition and a customer base already in place.

Although the opportunity to jump into something brand new came with excitement, it also came with immense challenges that forced me to rely on my existing network in the community, and to capitalize on opportunities to grow and expand my network.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER YOUNG PROFESSIONALS?

Trust your gut, don't be scared and realize that taking educated risks can pay off. If something is intriguing and exciting to you, don't be afraid to bet on yourself and go for it. In addition, remember to ask for help and find mentors in the community along the way.

WHO'S SOMEONE IN THE BISMARCK-MANDAN COMMUNITY WHO INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?

My dad was a leader in the Bismarck-Mandan community for many years and is someone who continues to inspire me. He is the reason that I believe leadership is measured by the impact you have on people, rather than the position that you hold. He wasn't concerned with recognition but instead was focused on doing the right thing when no one was watching and leading by example through servant leadership.

Watching the way that he handled adversity towards the end of his life only reinforced those lessons. His resilience, optimism and concern for others despite facing his own challenges continue to shape how I approach both my career and my community.

ICBA INDEPENDENT BANK RECOGNIZES FIRST STATE BANK & TRUST FOR 100 YEARS

100 years: 1926

BANK NAME	CITY	STATE
The Yellowstone Bank	Laurel	MT
Surety Bank	Deland	FL
Bank of Commerce & Trust Company	Crowley	LA
Corydon State Bank	Corydon	IA
Community Bank	Dunlap	IA
Citizens Bank	Butler	MO
St. Johns Bank & Trust	Saint Louis	MO
Logan County Bank	Scranton	AR
Produce State Bank	Hollandale	MN
State Bank of Lake Park	Lake Park	MN
The First National Bank of Moose Lake	Moose Lake	MN
First State Bank & Trust	Williston	ND
BankStar Financial	Elkton	SD
DNB National Bank	Clear Lake	SD
Quaint Oak Bank	Southampton	PA

In the August issue of ICBA's Independent Banker, ICBA recognized North Dakota community bank, First State Bank & Trust for 100 years.

Congratulations to First State Bank & Trust for 100 years in community banking.

Check out community banks all over the county celebrating major anniversary milestones online at https://www.nxtbook.com/mspc/independentbanker/august2026/



SKYE OLSEN

AMERICAN STATE BANK WELCOMES NEW COMMERCIAL LOAN OFFICER

American State Bank & Trust Co. (ASB) is pleased to announce the addition of Skye Olsen as its newest Commercial Loan Officer. With more than 14 years of banking experience, Olsen brings extensive knowledge of commercial lending and a strong commitment to helping local businesses achieve their financial goals.

Born and raised in Williston, Olsen understands the unique needs of businesses in the area and is passionate about building lasting relationships within the community. He has a particular interest in commercial real estate financing and enjoys partnering with business owners to develop thoughtful financing solutions that support growth and long-term success.

ASB Chief Lending Officer & Vice President Taylor Grundstad said, "Skye's local roots, banking experience, and commitment to serving communities in our area adds value to our experienced lending staff."

ASB's President/CEO Dave Hanson said, "We're excited to welcome Skye to our lending team." Hanson continued, "His experience, knowledge of commercial lending, and dedication to building strong customer relationships make him an excellent addition to our team."

Olsen earned a Bachelor of Accountancy from University of North Dakota. Outside of work, he enjoys competing in Strongman and being outdoors with his wife and three children.



ANN PETERSON



ANJIE MARTINS



EMILY SCHROEDER

DAKOTA BUSINESS LENDING PROMOTES THREE

Dakota Business Lending (DBL) is excited to announce the promotion of three members of their team.

These exciting changes reflect significant growth and milestones for DBL as the organization continues to expand their services and increase their capacity to better serve entrepreneurs across their footprint of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Minnesota.

Ann Peterson has been promoted to Chief Operating Officer. Peterson joined the company in 2021 with over 35 years of economic development and SBA 504 and 7(a) lending experience, 22 of which were spent at another 504 Certified Development Corporation (CDC) like DBL.

As COO, she will oversee the overall operations of DBL, focusing on the internal day-to-day operations, implementation and execution of the organization's long-term goals, and overseeing the Sales, Marketing, and Loan Operations teams.

Anjie Martins has been promoted to VP of Loan Operations. Martins joined the DBL team as an Underwriter in 2020 and most recently served as Sr. Credit Manager.

She will be responsible for managing the organization's overall Loan Operations team, including Processing & Credit, Closing, and Servicing.

Emily Schroeder is now a Sr. Business Development and Commercial Loan Officer. Schroeder has served DBL in a variety of roles since joining the team in 2015, most recently as Community Lending Director. She is returning to a Business Development / Commercial Loan Officer role to support and grow DBL's 504 portfolio and foster relationships with business owners, bankers, and lending partners, specifically in the Fargo/Moorhead area.



KARIE MISCHEL

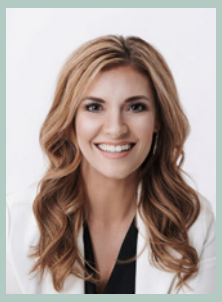
MISCHEL NAMED DCN INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGER

Karie Mischel has joined Dakota Carrier Network (DCN) as information systems manager based in Bismarck.

As IS manager, Mischel leads the team and all activities related to internal information technology, application development and administration, and cloud services. Additionally, she is responsible for the information systems budget and planning and directing the installation and maintenance of IT hardware and software.

With 30 years of experience managing enterprise infrastructure, cybersecurity, cloud services, and network operations, Mischel has led technical teams, managed budgets, overseen hardware and software lifecycles, supported cloud platforms, and directed large-scale IT projects. With experience in consulting, banking, and government, she has extensive expertise in routing, switching, security, compliance, disaster recovery, and cross-functional collaboration.

Mischel holds numerous professional certifications including Cisco Certified Network Associate, Cisco Certified Design Associate, Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, and CompTIA Network+.



RACHAEL ERICKSON

ERICKSON PROMOTED TO CHIEF RISK OFFICER AT STARION BANK

Starion Bank has promoted Rachael Erickson to Chief Risk Officer (CRO).

In her new role, Erickson will lead the bank's enterprise risk management strategy, helping ensure informed decision-making, regulatory compliance, and responsible growth across the organization. She previously served as Credit Manager and Senior Vice President.

Erickson brings more than 17 years of banking experience and deep institutional knowledge to the position. Since joining Starion in 2009, she has served in a variety of leadership and credit-related roles, including Credit Analyst, Credit Lead, and Credit Manager.

Her broad experience has provided insight into both customer-facing banking operations and the complex credit and risk management functions that support the bank's safety and stability.

Throughout her career, Erickson has worked closely with customers, lenders, executive leadership, regulators and teams across the organization, helping strengthen the bank's approach to credit administration and risk management.

As Chief Risk Officer, Erickson will focus on a proactive and enterprise-wide approach to risk management, helping the bank identify emerging risks, evaluate opportunities and support strategic decision-making.

Erickson earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and management from Dickinson State University.



PAIGE NAYLOR

DAKOTA BUSINESS LENDING WELCOMES BACK NAYLOR

Dakota Business Lending (DBL) is pleased to welcome back Paige Naylor to their team as Underwriter / Direct Lending Administrator. Naylor will work to ensure compliance with all DBL's programs, rules, and regulations, and develop and complete new credit requests. She will also assist with other lending-related activities and support DBL's direct lending options.

Born and raised in the Fargo area, Naylor originally joined the DBL team in 2019 and worked as a Credit & Underwriting Specialist for over five years until moving to Colorado and transitioning to the banking world in 2025. Naylor has been welcomed back to the DBL team to continue working with the Loan Operations team in Underwriting, as well as expanding DBL's direct lending program, now bringing with her 2 more years in the business/financing world. She looks forward to jumping back into DBL's mission and helping small businesses access the financing they need to start, grow, and expand across their footprint. In her free time, Naylor enjoys hiking, skiing, and camping in the mountains and spending quality time with her family.



FRED WOLFF



SHEILA JOHNSON



RHONDA VETTER



AMANDA MERNITZ



ANDREW ENTZI



GRACE PERDUE



NAGOSHIA GANGL



KAYLA VER HELST



COSIMA BUETTNER



ROBBY LUNDBOHM

BANK OF NORTH DAKOTA STAFF UPDATES

BND Bank of North Dakota

Fred Wolff

Congratulations to Fred Wolff and his promotion to Compliance Manager, effective July 1. Fred has been with BND since September 2024.

Sheila Johnson

Congratulations to Sheila Johnson and her promotion to Credit Review Manager, effective July 1. Sheila has been with BND since June 2022.

Rhonda Vetter

Congratulations to Rhonda Vetter who retired on July 2 after 42 years with Bank of North Dakota. BND wishes Rhonda all the best in her retirement!

Amanda Mernitz

Amanda Mernitz joined BND on Thursday, July 9 as the new Loan Portfolio Administrator. Amanda comes to BND from BNC National Bank where she was a Personal Banking Officer. She has an associate's degree in accounting, graphic design and communications.

Andrew Entzi

Andrew Entzi joined BND on July 13 as the new Staff Accountant I. He comes to BND from Bell Bank where he was a Personal Banking Specialist. He has a bachelor's degree in finance from North Dakota State University.

Grace PerDue

Grace PerDue joined BND on July 23 as the new Internal Auditor II. She comes to BND from Point CPA where she was an Assurance Associate III. She has a bachelor's degree in accounting and political science from University of Jamestown.

Nagoshia Gangl

Nagoshia Gangl joined BND on June 29 as a temp assisting the Talent Management team and transitioned to full-time Talent Management Business Partner August 1. Nagoshia previously worked at Starion as a Senior HR Business Partner and has a bachelor's in human resources from Dickinson State University.

Kayla Ver Helst

Congratulations to Kayla Ver Helst on her promotion to Public Affairs Manager. She has served in the role on an interim basis since March. Kayla joined BND in November of 2022 as the Sustainability Officer.

Cosima Buettner

Cosima Buettner joined BND on August 11 as the new Loan Quality Control Specialist. She comes to BND from Old National Bank where she was a Commercial Banking Specialist. She has a bachelor's in corporate and organizational communications from University of Texas.

Robby Lundbohm

Robby Lundbohm started at BND on August 28 as a Business Banker II based out of Fargo. Robby comes to BND from Valley Premier Bank where he was a Business Banker, VP. He has a bachelor's degree in math and organizational communications from Concordia College.

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BUILD, CO-MANAGE, OR OUTSOURCE? HOW COMMUNITY BANKS SHOULD EVALUATE MANAGED IT

By: Sean Martin | CSI | www.csiweb.com

Even a strong, capable IT team can only handle so much. As responsibilities (and risk) grow, financial institution leaders need to decide where to keep investing internally and where outside expertise can help close gaps without sacrificing control.

IT TEAMS ARE BEING ASKED TO COVER MORE

For many financial institutions, the same team handling user support and system maintenance is also expected to monitor threats, manage vendors, test backups, prepare for exams, and advance other IT initiatives. Everything may seem to be working fine until someone leaves, or an after-hours emergency hits.

Hiring employees isn't always an option. Across industries, ISACA reports that 55% of cybersecurity teams are understaffed and 65% have unfilled positions. Meanwhile, 73% of respondents to the American Bankers Association's Community Bank CEO Priorities for 2026 survey said that cybersecurity and data breaches "keep them up at night," with recruiting and retaining talent also ranking among their biggest growth concerns.

That changes the conversation around managed IT services. Instead of starting with, "Should we outsource IT?" ask: ***Where do we need more capacity, expertise, or coverage, and what's the most practical way to get it?***

Answering that question starts with a five-step review of your current needs, costs, and options.

1. ASSESS YOUR CURRENT GAPS

Before adding another position or evaluating managed IT service providers, look at what your team is already being asked to cover and how much bandwidth and flexibility they have:

- What routine tasks often get backed up?
- Which responsibilities depend heavily on one person?
- What happens after hours or when someone is on vacation?
- Who takes over when a team member leaves or a major incident occurs?

Look across infrastructure, cybersecurity, end-user support, backup and recovery, vendor management, documentation, and technology planning. One option is to use the CIS cybersecurity framework to identify gaps through a standardized perspective.

Next, consider the consequences of each gap. A slow help desk can frustrate employees and hurt productivity. Missed patches, limited monitoring, or poor documentation can create bigger problems for security and exam readiness.

Once those gaps are clear, priorities should be set based on the most critical business needs.

2. PRIORITIZE THE BIGGEST BUSINESS AND RISK IMPACTS

Rank each gap in your IT team by potential risks if your existing staff are unable to address an issue promptly.

Start with areas tied to cybersecurity, regulatory readiness, employee productivity, and account holder service. You don't need deep internal expertise across the board, but you do need dependable coverage where a failure could disrupt operations or increase risk.

This step also helps keep technology decisions tied to your financial institution's strategy. A gap that slows growth plans or leaves a critical system without adequate coverage should rise above work that's simply inconvenient.

With the priorities established, you can determine what it would take to address them internally.

3. CONSIDER THE FULL COST OF BUILDING INTERNALLY

The median annual wage for an information security analyst was about $129,000 in 2025, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, with employment projected to grow 29% from 2024 through 2034.

Add to that recruiting, benefits, certifications, training, security tools, licensing, after-hours coverage, and backup staffing. Specialized employees may also be difficult to replace quickly if they leave.

Outside support won't always cost less. The goal is to compare the full cost of maintaining the same expertise, coverage, and continuity over time, whether you build those capabilities internally or bring in outside support. The cost of a security breach or systems outage resulting from poor cyber hygiene may be significantly more.

4. MATCH OUTSIDE SUPPORT TO THE NEED

With that comparison in hand, decide where outside support makes sense. Managed services don't have to be all or nothing.

A financial institution with a strong internal IT team may need help only in specific areas, such as 24/7 security monitoring, device management, or backup and recovery. In cases like this, priorities and decisions can be made internally while a partner fills defined capacity or expertise gaps.

Outside support can also free up team members from routine work so they can focus on strategic projects, vendor management, security decisions, and technology planning.

Continued from Page 32.

And outsourcing the work doesn't mean outsourcing accountability. Leadership should know what's being handled and who's accountable. Outsourcing also doesn't have to mean that your internal IT team is locked out of your systems. Search for providers that offer co-managed solutions that provide ongoing support while still allowing your staff access to critical system information.

5. KNOW WHEN BROADER MANAGED SERVICES MAKE SENSE

For some financial institutions, targeted support may be enough. But when gaps start to span multiple areas, a broader managed model may be easier to sustain.

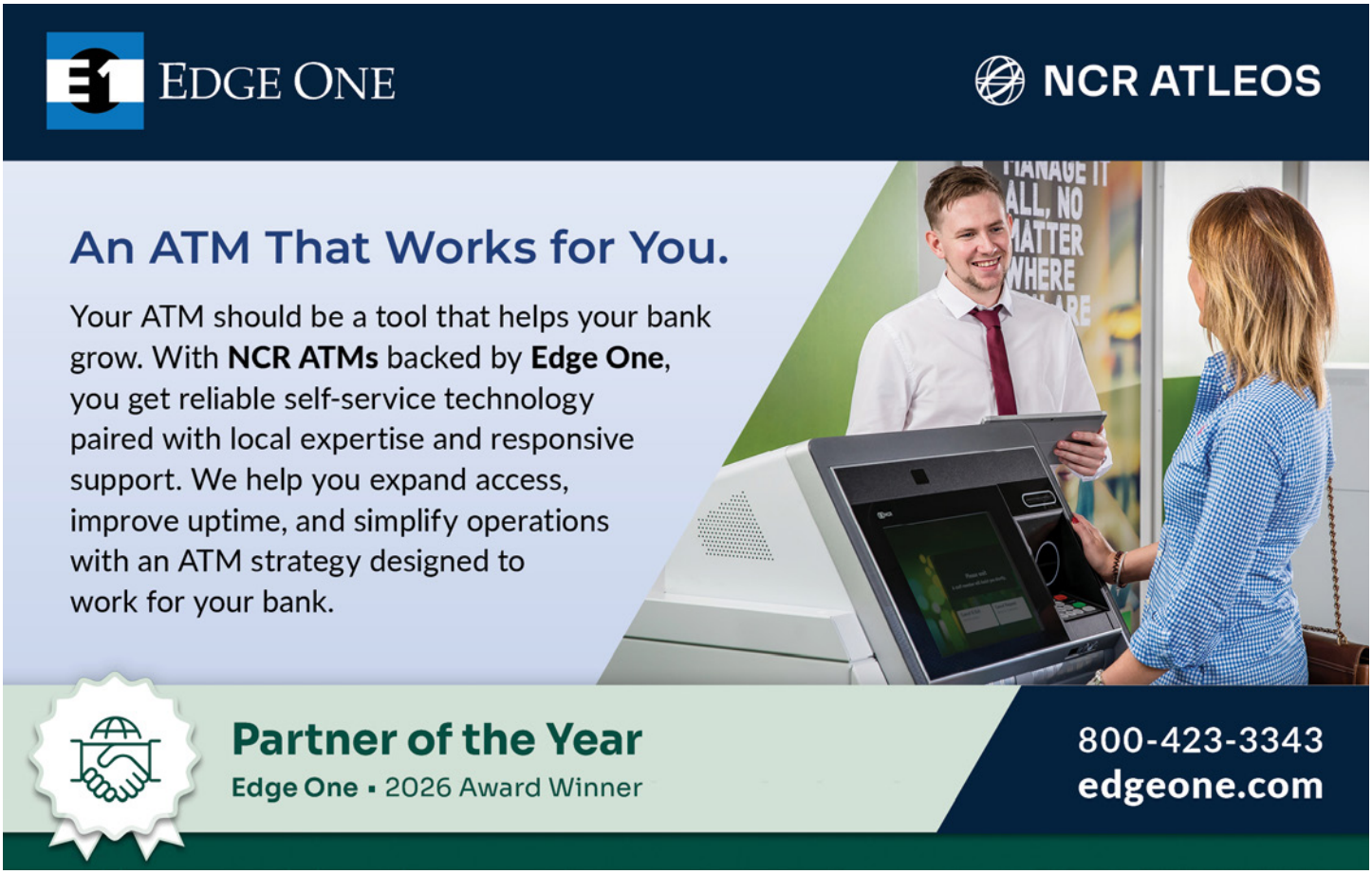
CSI's 2026 Spending Outlook found that 74% of financial institution leaders prefer to consolidate technology with as few providers as possible.

If gaps stretch across infrastructure, cybersecurity, support, and governance, a broader managed model may provide a more streamlined approach with greater consistency and accountability. It can also give smaller teams access to specialized expertise and added capacity without hiring for every role.

BUILD AN IT MODEL THAT CAN CHANGE WITH YOUR INSTITUTION

Managed IT doesn't have to come down to a choice between keeping everything in-house or fully outsourcing it. The right model gives your financial institution the expertise, coverage, and resilience it needs while preserving governance and visibility.

For some institutions, that may mean filling a few targeted gaps. For others, a broader managed services model may make more sense as staffing or risk demands grow. Base your decision on your strategy, risk profile, staffing realities, and the full cost of maintaining those capabilities internally.



WHAT IS THE CONSEQUENCE OF TAKING A COVERDELL ESA "NONQUALIFIED" DISTRIBUTION?

By: Mike Rahn | Ascensus | https://thelink.ascensus.com/articles

The Coverdell Education Savings Account (ESA) began life in 1997 as the Education IRA. It was created on the Traditional IRA model, but intended to assist in accumulating financial resources for post-secondary education, rather than retirement.

It has since been modified both in name and in purpose. In 2002 the Education IRA was renamed the Coverdell education savings account, or ESA, following the death in 2000 at age 61 of its chief proponent, Sen. Paul Coverdell, (R) Georgia. Its purpose has since been expanded to also include saving for certain primary and secondary school expenses.

HOW DO COVERDELL ESAS COMPARE TO 529 PLANS?

Despite the fact that ESAs were expanded in purpose, they have largely been supplanted by state and education institution-sponsored "529 plans". This is due largely to the 529 plan's more generous contribution limits, which allow for greater education savings over time. By contrast, the Coverdell ESA annual contribution limit has remained at its initial $2,000 amount, and has not been indexed for inflation, as have IRA and many other tax-qualified saving limits. Furthermore, up to $35,000 of 529 plan assets can be rolled over to a Roth IRA if certain conditions are met, a privilege not granted to ESAs. Similar to 529 plan contributions, ESA contributions do not qualify for a federal tax deduction, but earnings accrue tax deferred.

Nonetheless, there are many Coverdell ESAs in existence whose balances will eventually be used either for education expenses, or distributed to an account beneficiary—the intended "student"—for purposes other than education. Importantly, at age 30, such accounts are required to be distributed to the account beneficiary. It is unclear the extent to which ESA custodians adhere to this requirement.

ARE ESA DISTRIBUTIONS TAXABLE?

If ESA distributions are used timely to offset qualified education expenses there are no tax consequences. If they do not offset qualified expenses, the earnings are subject to tax and a 10 percent penalty tax. Distributions of contributory assets, or basis, are not subject to tax or penalty. While an ESA is open, distributions consist of pro rata portions of basis and earnings.

Qualified Education Expenses

Qualified Higher Education Expenses	• Tuition, fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for the enrollment or attendance of a designated beneficiary at an eligible educational institution • Certain room and board expenses for those who are at least half-time students • Expenses for special needs services (in the case of a special needs beneficiary) that are incurred in connection with enrollment or attendance at an eligible institution • Contributions to a qualified tuition program on behalf of the designated beneficiary
Qualified Elementary and Secondary Expenses	• Tuition, fees, academic tutoring, special needs services in the case of a special needs beneficiary, books, supplies, and other equipment that are incurred in connection with the enrollment or attendance of the designated beneficiary at an elementary or secondary school • Expenses for room and board, uniforms, transportation, and supplementary items and services (including extended day programs) that are required or provided by a public, private, or religious school in connection with such enrollment or attendance • Expenses for the purchase of certain computer technology or equipment (as defined in IRC Sec. 170(e)(6)(F)(i)) or Internet access and related services, if such technology, equipment, or services are to be used by the designated beneficiary and his or her family during any of the years the beneficiary is in school (Expenses for computer software designed for sports, games, or hobbies are not included unless the software is predominantly educational in nature.)

ARE ESA DISTRIBUTIONS TAXABLE?

While there is no escaping taxation of earnings in nonqualified ESA distributions, there are exceptions to the imposition of the 10 percent penalty tax. These exceptions include the following.

- Death
- Disability
- Designated beneficiary received a scholarship or certain other types of educational assistance
- (defined in IRS Publication 970)
- Distribution made for attendance at a U.S. military academy (within the allowable limits)
- Distribution taken into account in determining an American Opportunity or Lifetime
- Learning tax credit for the same year

Excess removed before June 1 of the year following the year for which the excess contribution was made



Live Well, Work Well

October 2026

What to Know About This Year's Flu Season

In the United States, influenza (flu) season lasts from October through May, with peak flu activity between December and March. What's more, flu season in the Southern Hemisphere often indicates what's to come in the United States. The 2026 season was notably milder than 2025's record-breaking outbreak, with case counts about half as high. However, experts caution that a mild start doesn't guarantee a mild finish, so vaccination remains the most effective way to prevent flu, especially severe disease and hospitalization.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the flu caused between 9.4 million and 51 million illnesses annually between 2010 and 2025.

How to Stay Healthy

The flu can cause serious complications for people of any age, but children and older adults are especially vulnerable. To help keep your household healthy this flu season, consider these tips:

- Get the flu vaccine. Being vaccinated against the flu is your best chance of preventing the illness. The CDC recommends that anyone 6 months and older get a flu shot every year.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay away from others when you feel unwell. Because flu, cold and COVID-19 symptoms are similar, doctors say it's best to get tested to know what you have.
- Wash your hands often using soap and warm water to protect against germs. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow, and dispose of tissues immediately.
- Get seven to nine hours of quality sleep each night to boost your immune system.
- Exercise regularly to strengthen your body and make it more resilient against infections, including the flu.
- Stay hydrated and eat a nutritious diet rich in whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, vegetables and fiber.

Experts recommend getting vaccinated against the flu by the end of October, so don't delay. Contact your doctor to learn more about vaccines.

How Your Body Reacts to Daylight Saving Time

Most of the United States shifts between standard and daylight saving time (DST) each year in an effort to "save" natural light. Clocks will be set back one hour on Sunday, Nov. 1, when the DST period ends. Although you may be excited about gaining another hour in your day, even a one-hour shift can throw off the body's internal timing system for days or longer.

Your circadian rhythm, the body's 24-hour internal clock, coordinates more than sleep. It times the release of melatonin and cortisol, hormones that govern when you feel sleepy and when you feel alert, and it also influences digestion, body temperature and immune function. When clocks shift, that internal cycle briefly falls out of sync with the external light-dark cycle it relies on to reset itself. The result can include daytime fatigue, slower reaction time and impaired focus and judgment. The earlier onset of evening darkness that comes with the time change can also affect mood, as reduced light exposure can lower serotonin activity.

If your area follows DST, consider these tips to help adjust to the time change:

- Exercise in the morning to increase your wakefulness and reset your internal clock.
- Prioritize daylight exposure, particularly in the morning, to help realign your circadian rhythm with the new schedule.
- Keep a regular sleep routine and aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Try to avoid the temptation to oversleep, as it can also disrupt your circadian rhythm.
- Remove sleep disturbances (e.g., alcohol, caffeine and blue light exposure) a couple of hours before bedtime.

Health experts recommend using the bonus hour for sleep. To make the DST transition easier, try going to bed 15 to 20 minutes earlier in the days leading up to it to help your body adjust. If you have any concerns, talk to your health care provider.

Does Sweating Burn Calories?

Sweat is a cooling mechanism, not a calorie-burning one. When physical activity raises core temperature, sweat glands respond by releasing fluid that evaporates and pulls heat away from the body. That process itself uses very little energy. The calories burned during a workout come from muscle activity, so a wet shirt is not a sign of a strong session.

How much a person sweats depends on factors unrelated to effort, including genetics, body size, hormones, hydration, fitness level, and the surrounding temperature and humidity.

Because of this, a well-conditioned exerciser may sweat heavily during a moderate session while someone less fit sweats very little during a harder one, even though calorie burn does not track the same way. This also explains why sauna sessions, hot yoga and other heated activities don't necessarily translate into greater fat loss. Any quick drop on the scale afterward is almost always water weight, which returns once fluids are replaced.

Rather than tracking sweat, better signals of real progress include steady changes in strength, endurance and body composition over time, along with sustainable habits like regular movement, adequate sleep and consistent nutrition. Talk to a health care professional for additional guidance.

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