Independent Banker

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Flourish by RRR

[pull quote] “Leadership lies not in the position you hold but in what you do with it.”

**After college, I moved back** to my hometown of Taos, N.M. I was driven by the goal of doing whatever I could do to make a difference in my community. At the young age of 22, I became the third generation of my family to take the helm as president of Centinel Bank of Taos. I was given a significant opportunity by the board and bank management—one I didn’t take lightly.

Becoming bank president that early in my career motivated me. I was inspired to deepen my engagement, better support our customers and expand our role in our community. Having that door opened to me unleashed a passion to do more to help community banks flourish.

This desire to serve has remained with me throughout my career and has led me to where I am today. In my late 20s, I was honored to join the Board of the Independent Community Bankers of New Mexico, where I focused on ways I could help meet our state’s community banking needs. Through that work, I started getting involved at the national level with ICBA, participating in committees, helping to form ICBA’s Minority Bank Council, joining the Executive Committee and, ultimately, becoming president and CEO of ICBA.

It all comes down to what we do with the chances we’re given. That’s why I love that this month we’re recognizing the “40 Under 40” rising stars of community banking. These are bankers who are doing great things, and their stories show what’s possible when a banker grabs hold of emerging opportunities and looks to better the community banking landscape.

These stories will inspire you to identify ways for your institution’s leaders to continue to grow.

Perhaps it’s an internal mentorship program, or maybe you can encourage them to attend ICBA’s annual event for emerging leaders, the LEAD FWD Summit, in September. You could empower your up-and-comers to expand subject-matter expertise by taking courses with Community Banker University or to increase their impact by getting more involved with ICBA. No matter the path you choose, let’s all be in the business of creating opportunities for new leaders—so they can continue to accomplish more!

Leadership lies not in the position you hold but in what you do with it. As today’s executives, one of the most important things we can do is support the advancement of the leaders of tomorrow. By cultivating those who will power the future of community banking, we enable them to do more to be bold in innovation, leadership and life.

**Where I’ll Be This Month**I’ll be speaking at the Alabama Bankers Convention and then at the joint convention hosted by the Idaho, Nevada and Oregon bankers associations.