Independent Banker

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Flourish by RRR

[pull quote] “Stepping into the unknown can help us accomplish great things.”

**It was wonderful to see so many of you at ICBA LIVE** a few weeks ago in Nashville, Tenn. It’s always great to be with fellow community bankers, and now, as ICBA president and CEO, our members! What a great time we had—full of learning, inspiration and fun.

Our theme this year was all about being bold, in innovation, leadership and life. Stepping into the unknown can help us accomplish great things. It forces us to see things from a new perspective, and it challenges us in ways that make us question, learn, improve and grow. It helps us to flourish.

It could be something as simple as making a loan to a new kind of business in your community, or bringing in a new technology. Whatever gives you the opportunity to do something positive for your customer, your community and your bank.

As community bankers, we are bold in our communities every day, but we can all try stretching just a little bit further. Our industry has so much momentum right now, especially in terms of advocacy and innovation, so now is the time to continue to push the boundaries.

That’s why, if you aren’t already planning to join us in Washington, D.C., later this month for ICBA’s Capital Summit (*icba.org/capitalsummit*), I encourage you to register. We’d love to have you join us. We need every community banker, from every corner of our nation, to tell the positive story of our industry with legislators. We need you to tell them how community banks, our customers and our communities are affected by the regulatory burden, unfair competition from credit unions and the Farm Credit System, and issues around data and cybersecurity.

Our newly released legislative and regulatory platform, Community Focus 2020: The Community Bank Agenda for Expanding Economic Opportunity (*icba.org/communityfocus2020*), is a multifaceted advocacy approach for the 116th Congress. ICBA has been hard at work sharing this framework with policymakers. We’re advocating common-sense reforms that will promote greater access to financial services and economic opportunity in local communities nationwide.

Who else is better equipped to advocate for economic prosperity at the local level? Nobody except you, community bankers. Feel honored and privileged to be part of such a profound mission. Your community and customers count on you.

So, let’s continue to be bold as we move forward after yet another fantastic national convention. We look forward to seeing you in Washington from April 28–May 1 for the ICBA Capital Summit!

**Where I’ll Be This Month**I’ll be in Little Rock, Ark., at The Venture Center for our Demo Day of the ICBA ThinkTECH Accelerator, and in Memphis, Tenn., with our state regional partners. I’ll end the month in Washington, D.C., for our ICBA Capital Summit.