



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida Announces Participation in the FDIC's Transaction Account Guarantee Program

January 21, 2009 – (Sarasota, Florida) - Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida, has announced Gateway Bank's participation in the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's Transaction Account Guarantee Program.

Under this program, through December 31, 2009, all non-interest bearing transaction accounts are fully guaranteed by the FDIC for the entire amount of the account. The guarantee also applies to interest bearing transaction accounts with interest rates of 0.50 percent or less. This program insures these accounts fully through the end of 2009, and is in addition to and separate from the coverage available under the FDIC's general deposit insurance rules.

In making the announcement, Merriman stated, "With banks and the economy in the news so much lately, many people are thinking more about the safety of their money. Even though Gateway Bank is a strong, well-capitalized institution, we have chosen to participate in this program to provide our customers with extra assurance that their money is safe."

About Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida: Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is an independent community bank serving business and consumer banking customers in Sarasota and Manatee counties.

The Manatee Avenue Banking Center is the second Gateway Bank location in Southwest Florida. It is located on the northwest corner of 21st Street West and Manatee Avenue West. Gateway Bank operates a full service banking center in the Center Pointe Plaza at 2033 Main Street in downtown Sarasota, one block east of South Washington Boulevard. The bank will

open a third banking center at 6204 North Lockwood Ridge Road and University Parkway in March 2009.

The shareholders and directors of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida are primarily residents of Sarasota and Manatee counties. The Board of Directors includes: Charles J. Bartlett – Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen and Ginsburg, PA; Dr. Gary K. Bockhold – Center for Sight; Dr. P.T. “Bud” Fleuchaus – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; David J. Grain – Grain Communications Group, Inc.; David K. Maholias – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; Shaun P. Merriman – Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida; Gavin W. Meshad – JWM Management, Inc.; Katherine K. Moulton – The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort; Wayne M. Ruben – Ruben-Holland Development, LLC; David E. Sessions, Willis A. Smith Construction Inc.; and Jan E. Smith – Jan Smith and Company.

Further information regarding Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida may be obtained by contacting Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO at 941-306-0105.