



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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941/306-0105

Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida Receives Prestigious LEED® Certification for University Parkway Banking Location

April 20, 2010 – (Sarasota, Florida) – Shaun P. Merriman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida, announced today that Gateway Bank has received the prestigious Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Certification for its banking center located at the intersection of University Parkway and Lockwood Ridge Road, by the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® Green Building Rating System™. This certification marks this facility as the first banking center in Sarasota County to be LEED® certified, and the sixth in the state.

In making the announcement, Merriman commented, "We believe in environmental awareness and have made a commitment to being a leader in the industry as it relates to the green initiative."

A former Regions Bank location, the University Parkway facility presented many challenges to the planning and building team. The Sarasota architectural firm, Carlson Studio Architecture, designed the renovation and Willis A. Smith Construction handled the actual construction. Both Carlson Studio Architecture and Willis A. Smith Construction are recognized leaders in the green building initiative on the west coast of Florida.

Obtaining LEED® certification is a challenging task, according to Michael Carlson of Carlson Studio Architecture. "LEED® certification is overseen by the U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and requires third party verification and inspection of all aspects of design and construction." Carlson continued, "In all of Sarasota County, less than ten commercial facilities have obtained this certification and at last count, only 130 buildings in the state have received LEED-NC certification."

Towards the goal of being LEED® compliant, the University Parkway Banking Center was renovated using materials which minimize the impact on the environment. Building materials with high recycled content were used, including exterior walls made of reused masonry block and a full brick veneer that is painted a lighter color to help reflect solar radiation. In addition, a number of energy saving features were employed, including specially designed low-e glass exterior windows and energy conscious lighting, heating and air conditioning. Special low chemical interior paints, carpeting, casework and cabinets were selected to reduce indoor air contamination. Ultra low-flow toilets were installed, as well as low-flow restroom faucets.

Concurrent with the announcement of obtaining LEED® certification, Merriman also announced the commitment of the company to obtain compliance with the Sarasota County Green Business Partnership standards. “We are currently investigating the steps we need to take to be a part of the Green Business Partnership, reinforcing our commitment to the highest environmental standards.” Merriman continued, “While we understand there are limitations to what can be done with existing structures, wherever possible, we encourage others to also take necessary steps to have environmentally friendly facilities.”

About Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida: Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is an independent community bank serving business and consumer banking clients in Sarasota and Manatee counties. Gateway Bank operates three full service banking locations. The main office is located at 1100 South Tamiami Trail in Sarasota. The University Parkway banking center is located at 6204 North Lockwood Ridge Road, and the Manatee Avenue Banking Center is located on the northwest corner of 21st Street West and Manatee Avenue West.

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 Capital, LLC; 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; and David E. Sessions, Willis A. Smith Construction Inc.

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

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