



BAYFIRST HIRES DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS BANKING, EXPANDS EFFORTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

St. Pete-Based Community Bank Welcomes SVP Hope Perez

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (Nov. 4, 2024) – St. Petersburg-based BayFirst National Bank has welcomed an 18-year industry expert to oversee the strategic direction and further development of the bank’s business banking platform. Hope Perez assumes the newly created position of SVP, director of business banking within the community bank. She is charged with the development, enhancement, and delivery of business banking products and services to businesses located in the communities supported by the bank’s 12 Tampa Bay area banking centers.

Perez most recently served as regional retail market executive leader at Synovus Bank where she spearheaded the success of three de novo branches, overseeing branch profitability, sales and team development, and loan portfolio management. Prior to that, she held the title of vice president at SunTrust Bank where she played a pivotal role in the success of the bank’s business banking division. She also previously held the same vice president title at both Regions and Bank of America.

In her new role, Perez will oversee BayFirst’s business banking program. In doing so, she will develop and implement the community bank’s strategic vision to drive growth and profitability as well as client satisfaction, focusing on business deposit growth and the implementation of treasury management products and services.

“As a true community bank focused on supporting local businesses at every stage of growth, we are excited to expand our impact under Hope’s direction,” said BayFirst CEO Thomas G. Zernick. “Her proven ability to develop and drive winning strategies, deliver tailored solutions, and maximize customer relationships will be invaluable, and I am confident that she will play a key role in helping both our clients and our bank achieve important goals.”

Perez received her degree from Northeastern Illinois University. She is a board member of the Lake Nona Chamber of Commerce, Weatherbee Elementary, and Commission 127 where she was also a foster care team leader.

About BayFirst National Bank

Headquartered in St. Petersburg, BayFirst National Bank is the principal subsidiary of BayFirst Financial Corp. (NASDAQ: BAFN), which as of June 30, 2024, had \$1.22 billion in total assets. BayFirst operates 12 banking centers in the Tampa Bay area and offers a broad range of retail and business banking services, including small business loans through its government-guaranteed lending division, and is one of the top-producing SBA lenders in the country. Since it opened in 1999, BayFirst has grown exponentially without losing sight of its commitment to making an impact in the community and being Here for What’s Next® in the lives of its customers. For more information, visit: www.BayFirstFinancial.com.

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