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**NEWS RELEASE**

PIONEER BANK HONORED FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

EDEN PRAIRIE, MN – February 1, 2017 – The Minnesota Bankers Association (MBA) recently recognized twenty-four Minnesota banks for their community involvement. Banks play an important and vital role in their communities, and to honor and recognize their involvement, the MBA created the Community Champion recognition program.

Pioneer Bank is one of the twenty-four Community Champions that worked with hundreds of organizations in their communities, providing funding, volunteers, materials, supplies, or food for their neighbors. Recipients of the recognition range in size from small community banks to large banks with multiple branches.

In total, these banks donated over \$1.2 million to over 600 organizations including the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, United Way, Salvation Army, American Cancer Society, Ronald McDonald House, Special Olympics, Minnesota Business Venture, local schools, churches, and non-profits. 931 employees from these banks dedicated over 34,000 hours at variety of volunteer events or programs.

MBA President/CEO Joe Witt congratulated the recipients. “This extraordinary level of volunteer participation by Minnesota banks demonstrates their deep commitment to the communities they serve,” said Witt. “In addition to providing the capital that helps families and local businesses thrive, the banking industry’s record of supporting local programs is second to none. The MBA is pleased to recognize these 24 banks for their commitment to making a real difference in their local communities.”

The MBA 2017 Community Champion recipients are:

Americana Community Bank, Chanhassen
BankCherokee, St. Paul
Center National Bank, Litchfield
Citizens Bank & Trust Co., Hutchinson
Citizens Bank Minnesota, New Ulm
Citizens Independent Bank, St. Louis Park
Community Resource Bank, Northfield
Eagle Bank, Glenwood
F & M Bank, Vadnais Heights

Farmers & Merchants State Bank, Springfield
First National Bank Bemidji, Bemidji
First National Bank of Osakis, Osakis
Frandsen Bank & Trust, Arden Hills
KleinBank, Chaska
Liberty Bank Minnesota, St. Cloud
Merchants Bank, N.A., Winona
Northeast Bank, Minneapolis
Pine Island Bank, Pine Island
Pioneer Bank, Mapleton
Premier Bank of Rochester, Rochester
Security State Bank of Hibbing, Hibbing
State Bank of Wheaton, Wheaton
United Community Bank, Perham
Winona National Bank, Winona

The Minnesota Bankers Association is the state's largest trade association devoted exclusively to the representation of commercial banks. The MBA was founded in 1889 and represents 95% of Minnesota's chartered banks. The MBA is proud to support our member banks as they work to ensure vital communities throughout the state. For more information, please visit our website at www.minnbankers.com.

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