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New OCC Pamphlet Spotlights CRA Performance

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- New Opportunities to Excel: Outstanding CRA Actions for Community Banks, a publication spotlighting Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) performance at small national banks, has just been published by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), the agency announced today.

In January 1996, revised CRA regulations went into effect for thousands of small community banks with assets of \$250 million or less. Since then, the OCC has examined several hundred of these banks, and found that the results of some of these examinations -- and the experiences and activities of the bankers -- merit comment. The OCC pamphlet is intended to recognize the efforts of some of the community bankers who have made the revised CRA work for them, and most importantly, to provide examples, inspiration and ideas to other small banks throughout the country.

"For the most part, we've mentioned ordinary banks with an extraordinary ability to look at the CRA potential of their communities and to make a firm commitment to help meet their credit needs, often by developing partnerships that benefited both the bank and the community," says Bert A. Otto, Assistant Deputy Comptroller for Compliance Management.

While not every opportunity exists for every national bank, "the community banks featured provide diverse examples of CRA as good business," Otto added.

Single copies of the pamphlet are available free of charge from the OCC by writing to: The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Public Disclosure Room, Mail Stop 1-5, Washington, D.C. 20219, or by faxing a request to (202) 874-4448. The full text of the publication is also posted on the OCC's website at <http://www.occ.treas.gov>.

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The OCC charters, regulates and supervises approximately 2,800 national banks and 66 federal branches and agencies of foreign banks in the U.S., accounting for more than half

the nation's banking assets. Its mission is to ensure a safe, sound and competitive national banking system that supports the citizens, communities and economy of the United States.