The Minnesota Bankers Association (MBA) recently recognized twenty-one 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. These twenty-one banks worked with hundreds of organizations in their communities, providing funding, volunteers, materials, supplies, or food for their neighbors. The twenty-one banks volunteered over 180,000 hours and over 1800 employees participated.

Recipients of the recognition range in size from small community banks to large banks with multiple branches. Many of these banks reported over 50 percent of the bank's employees volunteered on behalf of their bank for organizations such as the Rotary, 4H, Second Harvest Heartland, Catholic Charities, Boy Scouts, Minnesota Business Venture, Junior Achievement, United Way, Habitat for Humanity, local schools, churches, or non-profits.

MBA CEO/President Joe Witt congratulated the recipients and stated "Minnesota banks are the keystone of their communities. We created the Community Champion Recognition program to build awareness of the good things banks do to strengthen their communities. No industry does a better job of giving back to their communities than the banking industry, and the MBA is extremely proud to recognize these 21 exemplary banks."

Recipients are recognized with a certificate and at the MBA Bank Day at the Capitol event February 5 in St. Paul.

The MBA 2013 Community Champion recipients:

Americana Community Bank, Chanhassen
BANKWEST, Rockford
Beacon Bank, Twin Cities/Duluth
Bremer Bank, St. Paul
Center National Bank, Litchfield
Central Bank, Stillwater
Citizens Bank Minnesota, New Ulm
Eagle Bank, Glenwood
Exchange State Bank, Hills
Farmers & Merchants State Bank, Springfield
First National Bank Bemidji, Bemidji
KleinBank, Chaska
Northeast Bank, Minneapolis
Park Midway Bank, St. Paul
Premier Bank Rochester, Rochester
Reliance Bank, Faribault
Security BankUSA, Bemidji
Security State Bank of Hibbing, Hibbing
The Bank of Elk River, Elk River
Voyager Bank, Eden Prairie
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.