

Optus Bank Announces Key Executive Appointments

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES, July 11, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Optus Bank Chairman Paul Mitchell and the Board of Directors today announced the appointment of Benita Lefft as President of the Bank. Lefft will oversee the primary operating lines of business, risk management, finance, and all support functions for the Bank. Dominik Mjartan will continue as CEO and assume the duties of Vice Chairman of the Board, with a primary focus on the continued exponential growth of the Bank following a recently concluded successful \$100 million capital raise. This transition is part of a carefully planned leadership succession strategy that will allow the Bank to deploy new shareholder capital prudently, safely, and with a positive community impact.

Two years ago, Benita Lefft joined Optus Bank as Chief Operations Officer and Executive Vice President after more than 30 years with multinational financial institutions. Since joining the Bank, she successfully led the reorganization of Optus Bank's retail operations, commercial lending, human resources, marketing, communications, and other functions.

"Mrs. Lefft is a uniquely talented mission-driven leader who has helped the bank reach the next level of performance," said Paul Mitchell, Chairman of the Board. "I am confident that with Benita's leadership as our President and COO, we will continue to reach new positive social and financial returns."

In 2017, Dominik Mjartan joined Optus Bank as President, CEO, and significant investor. Since then, Optus Bank has experienced exponential growth with improvements in every measurable metric. Every year since 2018, the Bank has generated net income with cumulative gains of more than \$18 million. For the fiscal year 2023, Optus had the highest earnings in its history at \$6,732,000, with a 1.55% return on Average Assets. Optus' shareholders have benefited from



Benita Lefft, President and COO

more than \$17 million in revenues from 2018 to Q1 2024. Total Assets have increased over 1,000% to more than \$580,000,000. Total Loans have increased by more than 1,000% to \$350,000,000, and Total Deposits have increased by more than 1,000%. Equity capital increased by over 2,500% from 2017 to \$120 million. Asset quality has continued to improve, with a significant decrease in nonperforming loans from over 10% to less than 1%. Book value per common share has grown by more than 235%, and Optus's parent company recently issued dividends for the first time since 2008.

About Optus Bank

Optus Bank's origins date back to 1921, when a group of visionary and courageous African American leaders founded a bank on the principle that everyone should have access to the American Dream, regardless of circumstances. Optus Bank is a federally designated Minority Depository Institution, a U.S. Treasury Certified Community Development Financial Institution, and an FDIC-insured depository. Optus Bank empowers our customers and communities to build lasting wealth and improve their financial lives with relationship banking services. We foster economic development by creating, promoting, and delivering responsive and responsible financial products and services designed to support underserved individuals, businesses, and economically distressed communities in the State of S.C. and across the United States. Optus Bank is increasingly fulfilling its purpose as a Community Development Financial Institution and a Minority Owned Bank. In 2023, more than 90% of loans went to underserved areas, majority-minority areas, minority borrowers, or historically disadvantaged communities.

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