

# FLORIDA BANKING

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**2011-2012  
FBA Chairman  
Greg Bryant**



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Chairman Greg Bryant**

*Bryant stands by a painting done by his father-in-law, Terry Smith. Smith's wildlife-themed art is showcased throughout the bank's corporate offices.*

**I**ncoming FBA Chairman Greg Bryant is president of Florida Business BancGroup, and president and chief executive officer of Bay Cities Bank. He has been active in the FBA for more than a decade, first becoming involved through service on the Government Relations Council (GRC). Over the ensuing years, Bryant has steadily increased his involvement, participating in Washington, D.C., fly-ins, various leadership functions and other FBA events.

“We started Bay Cities in 1999, and I joined the GRC in 2001,” said Bryant. “I have been involved in a variety of ways ever since. The FBA does a great job in carrying the flag for our industry and I am honored to be able to serve as chairman of this great organization.”

After the annual meeting, Bryant moves from the FBA board of directors to chairman. Additionally, he is a member of the FBA-FDIC advisory board and the FBA executive committee. At Bay Cities Bank, Bryant is in good company when it comes to FBA involvement. Bank Chairman Bronson Thayer and fellow board member John Wulbern are both past FBA chairmen.

“Active involvement in the Florida Bankers Association is in our company’s DNA” said Bryant. “It’s a privilege to serve and I’m looking forward to the opportunity.”

In the coming year, Bryant hopes to build on the good work that has been accomplished under the leadership of outgoing Chairman Van Bogan. Bryant highlights pending interchange legislation, credit unions seeking to expand their commercial lending powers and regulatory reform as areas demanding attention.

“The FBA team does a tremendous job in giving Florida bankers access to decision-makers. Our state presents a unified voice, and this gives us credibility,” said Bryant. “The hard work of persistently taking our message to those who can influence the process falls to member banks. We must continue to dedicate ourselves to protecting our industry.”

### **Bay Cities Bank**

Bay Cities Bank opened on November 11, 1999. Since opening, its focus on small- and middle-market business and affluent individuals hasn’t changed. The bank, which has 85 employees, has its headquarters and main office in the West Shore area of Tampa; Bay Cities also has locations in Lutz, Carrollwood and South Tampa, as well as an office in St. Petersburg.



### **Meet Gregory W. Bryant**

Greg Bryant is the president of Florida Business BancGroup and the president and chief executive officer of Bay Cities Bank. He has served in that role since January 2001. Bryant first joined Bay Cities Bank as its executive vice president and senior lender in October 1999. Prior to joining Bay Cities Bank, he held senior management positions with GE Capital and SouthTrust Bank, including oversight of commercial lending activities in the Tampa Bay region.

A board member of the Florida Bankers Association and Independent Bankers Bank of Florida, Bryant is also active in the CEO Council, as a Leadership Tampa Alumni, with Kiwanis Club of Tampa and as a youth sports coach. Bryant is also a deacon at Idlewild Baptist Church and has served on the church’s finance and personnel committees.

Bryant earned his bachelor’s degree from Jacksonville State University, and graduated from the University of Colorado’s Graduate School of Banking.

“Our mission is to build meaningful relationships with customers and create an atmosphere of opportunity with employees,” said Bryant. “We think that if you can get these two things right, everything else will fall into line. Our focus is on supporting the companies and individuals that make our community thrive.”

Prior to joining Bay Cities, Bryant had been with SouthTrust Bank for more than 13 years. He joined SouthTrust straight out of college and held a number of positions, eventually overseeing commercial lending and business banking in the Greater Tampa Bay area. Two of his SouthTrust directors resigned to become founding directors for Bay Cities. They recruited Bryant, who has “never looked back.”

Since joining the start-up bank, Bryant has led its growth to roughly \$600 million in total assets. He cites



*The Bryant family at home. Clockwise from left: children Parker, Trevor, Ashlyn, Elise and wife Kellie.*

his primary responsibilities as developing strategy, building a talented team of bankers and fostering an environment that holds people accountable for executing at a high level.

“We hire the best, and expect a lot out of them... but also think it’s important to have a little fun along the way,” said Bryant.

“The bank has grown through a relationship-based model, providing credit to and handling the deposits of companies and individuals in our own backyard,” said Bryant. “Bay Cities has established a solid track record in both attracting high-caliber employees, and also in raising capital.”

In 2010, Bay Cities Bank’s holding company, Florida Business BancGroup, Inc., exceeded its own expectations when it was oversubscribed for a stock offering that generated \$21.2 million in new capital.

## **A High Bar for Community Involvement**

Bryant sets high standards for himself and his employees. One example is community service. Bay Cities Bank requires community involvement for all its officers; they each have a standing goal of being involved with at least two appropriate community or civic activities. As a result, Bay Cities Bank employees are active in a wide variety of activities throughout the greater Tampa community. The bank has supported such organizations as Service for Seniors, Hospice, Helping Hands for Teachers and Trinity Café for the Homeless. The bank also makes regular presentations at local elementary schools.

“We are proud that Bay Cities Bank employees volunteered more than 700 hours last year,” said Bryant.

“Part of our brand promise is to give back. Sincere service makes you part of the community’s fabric.”

In terms of his own involvement, Bryant is active in the CEO Council, Moffit Cancer Center’s Advisory Board, Tampa-Hillsborough Economic Development Council, Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and Kiwanis Club of Downtown Tampa. He is an alumni of Leadership Tampa, Leadership Tampa Bay and Leadership Pinellas.

Community is important to Bryant, as is his family, which is well-established in the Tampa area.

## **Family Values**

Bryant has been a resident of Tampa since 1987. He and his wife, Kellie, have four children: 17-year-old twin daughters Ashlyn and Elise, 14-year-old son Trevor, and 10-year-old son Parker.

In his time away from the bank, Bryant enjoys spending time with his family. Activities include golfing, fishing, biking and “lots of trips to the beach.” With such a big family, it seems there is always one event or another.

“Some nights we might juggle kids between cheerleading, baseball practice and rehearsal for the school play,” said Bryant. “And, at this time of year, we can still rush home to sneak in a little fishing before it gets too dark.”

Bryant also likes to work, saying “I genuinely enjoy banking.” If he’s not with his family, he is probably at the bank or vice versa.

“Building this bank with so many good people who have worked together for so many years, it has started to feel like family,” said Bryant. “Now I’m looking forward to expanding that family even more to include the FBA during my term as chairman.”