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FUTURE PROMISING FOR WOMEN IN FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY ***Women at the Top™* Study Shows Female Leaders in Executive Pipeline**

Roseville, Minn. (9/15/09) – Women still hold around one-quarter of senior-level management positions at large community banks, according to the latest [Financial Women International \(FWI\) *Women at the Top™*](#) study, but the post-recession banking environment may change that.

Just 23 percent of senior-level bank managers were women at the 40 community banks that responded to the survey – in all, 51 women out of 224 bank leaders. The number of women in each executive job included:

- Chief executive officer (1);
- Chief operating officer (3);
- Chief financial officer (2);
- Bank president or division president (3);
- Executive vice president (10); and
- Senior vice president (32)

In addition, at least 188 women had the title of vice president or assistant vice president.

Although the study found that 38 percent of respondent banks had no women in leadership positions, FWI President Melissa Curzon said there is reason for optimism.

“If you look at the research, companies with more women in senior management have a higher return on equity. Progressive financial institutions know this,” said Curzon, president of Triumph Solutions Inc. in Mission Viejo, Calif. “Our industry is evolving rapidly right now, and as a result more opportunities will be available to women with the right experience and education in place.”

The [2008 *WATT™* study](#) found that women held 27 percent of executive-level bank positions at 48 of the nation’s 50 largest community banks.



About the *Women at the Top™* study: Finance students at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, led by FWI member and finance instructor Terrilyn Morgan, conducted the *WATT™* study. Students identified the nation's 50 largest community banks, defined as banks with less than \$1 billion in assets, using Federal Reserve data. Respondent banks ranged in size from \$270 million to \$968 million in assets. Data was collected through online research and contact with human resources managers. Financial Women International has conducted the *WATT™* study regularly since 1999. Another FWI study, [The Leadership Gap](#), identified the core competencies that senior bank managers seek in their successors.

Going forward, FWI's *WATT™* study and *WATT™* blog will continue under new ownership. To learn more about the future of *Women at the Top™*, please contact Regina Barr at www.theWATTblog.com, info@theWATTblog.com or (651) 453-1007.

About Financial Women International: FWI has been the nation's largest professional association for women in financial services since 1921. For more information, visit www.fwi.org or call 1-866-236-2007.

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