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WOMEN TAKE SMALL STEPS FORWARD IN LARGE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS **Women at the Top® Study Shows Slight Growth in Executive Pipeline**

Inver Grove Heights, Minn. (11/30/10) – Women hold less than one-fifth of the senior-level management positions at large commercial banks according to the latest *Women at the Top® (WATT®) Study*, but organizations seeking out the best talent may change that.

Out of 523 positions within the Top 50 banks, 91 positions (17.4 percent) were held by women. Of those, only 8 women held C-level positions as follows:

- Chief executive officer (0);
- Chief operating officer (3);
- Chief financial officer (4);
- Chief administrative officer (1)

Although the Study shows limited progress in terms of growth in leadership positions held by women, WATT® Network Founder Regina Barr said she remains optimistic that more women will make their way into the executive suite.

“Companies are becoming more transparent in their hiring practices and goals in order to secure the best talent for their organizations,” said Barr, President of Red Ladder, Inc. and Founder of the WATT® Network in Inver Grove Heights, Minn. “Women who have the right skills, and who make their interests in attaining senior level positions known, will be in demand. This, combined with the fact that companies with more senior level women boast higher financial returns, all bode well for women in financial services.”

The [2005 WATT® Study](#) found that women held just 12.6 percent of executive-level bank positions at the nation’s 50 largest commercial banks. This shows a gain of 4.8 percent of women holding executive management positions in a five year period when compared with the *2010 WATT® Study*. “That’s good news, particularly considering the challenges financial services companies have faced in the last two years,” noted Barr. “Often when we see industry consolidation through bank closures or merger and acquisition activity, we also see some fallout for women in executive-level bank positions in the study. That’s not the case this time.”



Despite the uptick in the percentage increase of women in executive-level bank positions, Barr noted that there were no women CEOs in any of the 50 largest commercial banks this time compared with one female CEO in the 2005 WATT® Study. Barr said, "There's still work to be done. Now is the time for women to invest in their own professional development so that they will be well positioned when leadership opportunities present themselves."

About the WATT® Study: Finance students at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, led by WATT® Network member and finance instructor Terrilyn Morgan, conducted the WATT® Study. Students identified the nation's 50 largest commercial banks, defined as banks with total assets of more than \$1 billion in assets, using Federal Reserve data. Banks in the Study ranged in size from \$12.2 billion to \$1.7 trillion in assets. Women at the Top® has conducted the WATT® Study regularly since 1999.

Another study, the [Leadership Gap Study](#), authored by WATT® Network Founder, Regina Barr, identified the core competencies that senior bank managers seek in their successors which included communication, problem solving, personal integrity, vision, and planning and goal setting. For more information about the WATT® Study or the *Leadership Gap Study*, please visit www.theWATTnetwork.com or call 651-453-1007.

About Women at the Top®: Women at the Top® is a community of women at or aspiring to the C-Suite who share the desire to develop and nurture their leadership skills, and those of other women. For more information, visit www.theWATTnetwork.com or call 651-453-1007.

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