



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Community Bank & Trust Named Small Business of the Year by the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce**

**LaGrange, GA - Jan. 26th 2025** - Community Bank & Trust has been named Small Business of the Year by the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce, with the honor announced at the Chamber's annual Chairman's Gala celebrating leadership, service, and economic impact across the community.

For more than a century, Community Bank & Trust has served as a quiet but enduring pillar of Troup County, rooted in trust, driven by relationships, and guided by a simple mission: serve people, not just accounts. Today, Community Bank & Trust stands as the last and only majority locally owned and operated community bank in Troup County, led by people who live here, work here, and make decisions here.

"Community Bank & Trust is exactly the kind of business this award was created to honor," said Connie Hensler, President of the Chamber. "They are deeply invested in this community, committed to relationships over transactions, and consistently demonstrate what it means to lead with integrity, service, and heart."

Like many small businesses, Community Bank & Trust has weathered its share of challenges. There was a time when the institution's future was uncertain. But through the determination of its committed staff, the loyalty of its customers, and the vision of leadership that chose to rebuild, the Bank emerged stronger, more resilient, and is now nationally recognized for its financial performance and community focused service model.

Today, the Bank combines deep local roots with a nationally respected government-guaranteed lending platform supporting rural and underserved businesses across the country. That national reach allows Community Bank & Trust to reinvest even more back into Troup County, supporting local entrepreneurs, schools, nonprofits, and community initiatives that strengthen the local economy.

The bank's impact extends far beyond banking. Community Bank & Trust team members are active volunteers, mentors, and advocates who help build the communities where they live and serve. From teacher appreciation programs and food drives to business support initiatives and family-focused events, Community Bank & Trust doesn't just operate in Troup County, it helps build it.

"This award is a reflection of the people who make Community Bank & Trust what it is," said Bill Stump, Director of Community Banking for Community Bank & Trust. "Our team shows up every



day for our customers and our community, and being recognized in this way reinforces why local banking and local relationships still matter.”

In an era of digital transactions and distant decision-making, Community Bank & Trust remains a living example that local still matters, relationships still matter, and doing the right thing always matters. While many institutions have merged, moved, or centralized decision-making elsewhere, Community Bank & Trust has remained personal, accessible, and accountable to the community it serves.

“While banking has evolved dramatically, our commitment to personal relationships and hometown decision making has never wavered,” said Jeremy Gilpin, Chairman and President of Community Bank & Trust. “This recognition belongs to our entire Community Bank & Trust family and to the customers and community who stood by us and believed in what local banking can still be.”

The Small Business of the Year award recognizes not only what Community Bank & Trust has accomplished, but what it has helped others accomplish: small businesses launched, jobs created, projects completed, and families supported through access to trusted local capital.

Because when Troup County succeeds, Community Bank & Trust succeeds and that is the kind of balance sheet that truly counts.

### **About Community Bank & Trust**

Community Bank & Trust has proudly served its customers and communities for more than 125 years, and now stands as the last and only locally owned and operated community bank in the county. Offering a full range of personal and business banking services, the bank combines hometown service with nationally recognized government-guaranteed lending expertise. Through local leadership, community reinvestment, and a customer-first approach, Community Bank & Trust remains committed to strengthening the community it calls home.