

FDIC News

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Employee Newsletter

DECEMBER 2024

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Employees Gather for Festive 2024 Holiday Reception

On December 11, 2024, Chairman Martin J. Gruenberg welcomed more than 500 FDIC employees to the Bair Auditorium at the FDIC's Virginia Square campus to celebrate the holidays.



Chairman Gruenberg

Division of Administration Director Jennifer Schoen introduced Chairman Gruenberg, who spoke briefly to thank employees for their service and wish them well for the holidays. His remarks were streamed live to all employees.



Attendees were treated to a bountiful selection of holiday refreshments that received rave reviews, and the decorations reflected the "Winter Wonderland" holiday theme, complete with cotton snow, while holiday music filled the auditorium. 🏠



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Holiday Reception, from page 2



On December 13, the Kansas City Field Territory (Risk) celebrated with a “crazy holiday sweater” day. Because several people were new, Supervisory Examiner Dean Anderson said the event featured a “personal trivia” contest, during which teams formed to try to match each person with their childhood photo and trivia. “It was a great team-building exercise!” he said.

FDIC's CFC Campaign Manager Brings Personal Commitment to Her Role

By Sonya Weakley

Office of Communications



Though it is her first time as the FDIC's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Manager, Sloane Bailey is not new to [the CFC](#).

Bailey, Data Strategy Section Chief in the Division of Information Technology (DIT), began contributing to the CFC in 2010, when she joined the federal government. She said the CFC made it easy for her to contribute to her favorite cause – animal welfare.

"I was heavily involved in a Northern Virginia animal rescue. I thought, well, I'm already giving them money. Why don't I just put it through this?"

Her dog, an American Staffordshire Terrier named Bear, came from the Humane Rescue Alliance in Washington, D.C., a CFC charity. "I have for many years fostered, adopted, transported, donated to, and volunteered for different animals," Bailey said.

Besides small animal charities, Bailey supports wild animal rescues, include

the Wildcat Sanctuary in Minnesota, for which she is on the board of directors, and the Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee.

Both provide safe places where the animals can safely roam without human intrusion, although the Elephant Sanctuary has a center where visitors can watch the animals via field cameras, and learn amazing things.

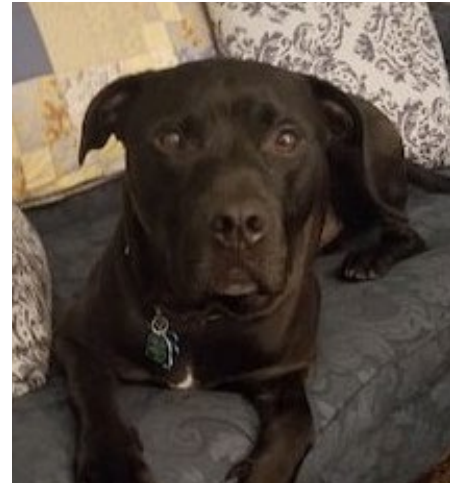
"There was a pair of elephants that had been together as babies. And 25 years later, one had already been at the sanctuary and the other was coming in, and they recognized each other and went to the gate to try and get to one another before the caretakers could open it."

She added that it's also easy to pledge volunteer hours, and the CFC will calculate the monetary value of the time.

"I think it's important to give back," she said, "and the CFC gives you a really easy way to do it. You make your pledge and it's through payroll deduction. It calculates the biweekly deduction, and that's it. You don't have to think about it again. There's such an amazing array of charities to donate to."

Bailey also suggested that donors pay attention to the "administrative and fundraising rate" (AFR), which is the percentage of a charity's total revenue and support that is spent on expenses other than services.

The CFC includes the AFR in each charity's listing. "The lower the rate, the



Sloane Bailey adopted her dog Bear, an American Staffordshire Terrier, from the Humane Rescue Alliance in Washington, D.C., a CFC charity.

more that goes to the work. You have to expect some level of overhead, especially if it is a nationwide one versus an all-volunteer based organization."

Objective information about charities is also available on [Guidestar.org](#), she said. "I would encourage people to do their research. Check out what the CFC provides and then what GuideStar tells you."

Bailey encouraged employees to think about what they are passionate about and how they want to help. "Find those charities, and feel good about giving and supporting charities that support what's important to you. 🐾"



SCAN QR CODE TO GIVE NOW

Studies show that when you give happiness, you get happy too. The CFC offers all of us at the FDIC the opportunity to be a part of positive change in communities, families, and homes across the country. Since its inception in 1961, the CFC has helped raise more than \$8.76 billion for charities and people in need. Scan the QR code to learn more and GIVE HAPPY! Visit [GiveCFC.org](#) for more information.

What the CFC Means to Me: Cassandra Ashe

The annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is taking place through January 15, 2025, and the theme is “Give Happy.” Take a minute to read what contributing to the CFC means to FDIC employees, like Cassandra Ashe, Digital Information Specialist in the Office of Communications and longtime CFC Keyworker. To quickly donate, scan the QR code at the end of the previous story.

“I’d like people to know that together “WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.” We’re all passionate about something (helping people, animals, etc.). My ask is that you take the time to explore the many ways contributing to the CFC can benefit those in need. The CFC has thousands of charities you can contribute to financially or with volunteer hours. I am asking everyone to take a moment to see yourself or someone you know in the shoes of someone who may need help.”

—Cassandra Ashe

Why do you participate in the CFC?

I participate in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) because it’s an opportunity to contribute to causes that align with my values and make a real difference in people’s lives. Through the CFC, I can support a variety of organizations addressing critical needs like health care, education, disaster relief, and more. It’s rewarding to know that even small contributions, when combined with others, have a powerful impact. For me, it’s a meaningful way to give back and be part of something bigger than myself.

How long have you participated?

I’ve participated in the CFC my entire federal career and it’s one of the most anticipated times of year for me, knowing I can help make a difference in someone’s life by donating money and/or time to a variety of causes. In addition to participating in the CFC, I have been a CFC Keyworker for 10+ years while working in the Office of Communications (OCOM).

How did you first find out about the CFC?

I first learned about the CFC as a federal employee. While hesitant at first because of the negativity from some (i.e., they didn’t believe in the cause,

administrative fees too high, etc.), I finally decided to go with my gut and contribute to a charity. My first contribution, and being able to do so via payroll deduction, gave me a feeling I can’t describe. I’m very big on community service and giving back, and the CFC helps me achieve this goal.

Do you have a favorite charity? If so, please provide the complete name.

The charities that are near and dear to my heart are [Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation](#) and the [Breast Cancer African American, Sisters Network](#). These are the two charities I contribute to yearly as I have seen how both have helped people I know personally during their battles with cancer.

What does this charity do?

Both charities help women with breast cancer with resources, finances, and hope, not only for the patients and survivors, but their families as well. I advocate for both charities and have participated in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Walk, and I have also volunteered with helping prepare walkers and encouraging them along the route during the walk. The experience as a fellow walker and a volunteer has been incredible.

What is your interest in this charity? Do you have a personal connection to it? If so, please tell us your story.

My interest in these charities is the same, as they help victims of breast cancer. My particular interest in Breast Cancer African American, Sisters Network is personal, as one of my dearest friends often said she didn’t feel “seen or heard” when she needed someone to talk to about her diagnosis. I went online and specifically researched breast cancer support for women of color and came across their website.

When I shared the information with my girlfriend she called me and said, “Thank you . . . I truly feel someone who looks like me can identify what I’m dealing with, and I can now look at this diagnosis with a clear head.” That made me feel good as she was truly having a hard time when she was first diagnosed; however, this



Cassandra Ashe

charity gave her the glimmer of hope she desired, and although she lost the battle it was comforting to see her smile return. I will forever be grateful for the words of encouragement, the talks, the information, and everything they poured into her to ease her pain.

What would you like others to know about participating in the CFC?

I’d like people to know that together “WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.” We’re all passionate about something (i.e., helping people, animals, etc.). My ask is that you take the time to explore the many ways contributing to the CFC can benefit those in need. The CFC has thousands of charities you can contribute to financially or with volunteer hours. I am asking everyone to take a moment to see yourself or someone you know in the shoes of someone who may need help.

Please feel free to include any other comments you would like to make about the CFC.

I am and will always be an avid supporter of the CFC both financially and as a volunteer. If you want to learn more about the CFC, please visit their website and help make a difference in the lives of others. 🏠

Celebrating Native American Heritage: A Powerful Tribute and Insightful Engagement

By Sonya Weakley
Office of Communications

During the FDIC's celebration of [Native American Heritage Month](#), Milton Hunt, a member of the Lumbee tribe, employed dramatic storytelling with a mix of humor and candor to challenge stereotypes and advocate for understanding and support of Native American communities.

The event, part of the FDIC's Diversity and Inclusion Education Series, highlighted this year's theme, "Native Americans: We're Not a People of the Past; We're a People of the Future," emphasizing that Native Americans are not only historical figures but are vibrant members of contemporary society. The program took place on November 19 in the Hove Auditorium at Virginia Square.

Hunt, an author, motivational speaker and employee coach, highlighted the importance of self-awareness and heritage appreciation while addressing systemic issues, such as healthcare disparities and the need for authentic representation.

He described Native Americans as the country's smallest minority group, with a population of roughly 6.79 million, and said that 78 percent live off tribal lands. "We're in some rural, some urban settings just like you. We probably work, worship, and play, shop, and may even work right next to you," he said.

Most Native Americans live off reservations due to what Hunt described as third-world conditions and substandard housing. "How about this one? A 27,000-square-mile reservation with five supermarkets. Sounds like a food desert to me," he said.

"We can't even get Amazon," he added. "You've got to have an address to get Amazon. Reservations don't have addresses. Are you kidding me?"

Proudly sharing his Lumbee heritage, Hunt highlighted the importance of knowing and embracing one's roots. He said his parents migrated from tribal lands in search of better opportunities in 1950.

"These were farmers from the south. I said to my father, why in the world did you go to Baltimore? He said, 'that's where a tank of gas would take me. And that's all I had.' While we were indigenous to the land, we weren't welcome in the land where we were."

Though his tribe is based in North Carolina, he became an advocate for the 42,000 Native Americans in Maryland, lobbying the state legislature in regard to health care disparities.

FITTING IN

He described growing up dealing with racism and stereotypes, sharing anecdotes from his high school days and personal life, emphasizing the struggle to belong. "I remember being in high school at age 16, and they used to say, 'Hey, Milt, you look You Tonto?' No, I'm not Tonto. Oh Lord. Stereotyping biases."

He recounted childhood experiences playing Cowboys and Indians, always being relegated to the role of the Indian. This led to life lessons from his father about identity and pride.

"I got tired of falling down, right? Boom. I fall down. I came home, told my father, 'I'm going to be the cowboy.' He said, 'with my dead body. You're going to be the Indian until the day you die.' Little did I know what he was instilling in me right then, in 1968, was purpose and passion and identity. Know who you are."

Alcoholism, drugs, and incarceration were also part of his life. "Why? Cause that was my role models. So we got all these social ills. My job was to satisfy every one of them to be that stereotypical native American," he said.

"Don't feel bad for me because I had to go through that to get to where I'm at so I could impact some other Native Americans."

He said the federal government recognizes 575 tribes, and Native Americans must prove heritage of at least 25 percent to be a member of a tribe.



Milton Hunt

He described federal recognition of tribes as having positive and negative implications. "Let me tell you the number one reason that a lot of tribes want that federal recognition. Woo hoo! Well, we call it gaming. It's an economic development engine."

He advocated for focusing on health care and education rather than just economic gains.

"There's only probably a dozen or so tribes that really, as I have researched, are making a great impact [through gaming]. I'm not saying it doesn't work for the other tribes, I'm just saying that shouldn't be the only reason. That shouldn't be the lead. I feel like health care should be the lead. I feel like education should be the lead."

The program opened with a welcoming address from Katrice Yokley, Special Advisor to the Director, Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI), who emphasized the FDIC's dedication to having a diverse workforce.

Becky Baker Bennett, Supervisory Human Resources Specialist, Division of Administration (DOA), also shared a familial tale of her Choctaw grandmother's beaded jewelry, inviting

see **Celebrated Heritage**, page 7

Celebrated Heritage, from page 6

listeners to explore and appreciate Native American cultures.

The event concluded with reflections from Claire Brolin, a co-president of the Corporate Advocacy Network for Disability Opportunities (CAN DO), an FDIC-recognized Employee Resource Group, who drew parallels between Milton's message and a college professor's insightful commentary on cultural identity.

"When I was studying abroad in Mexico, I remember a history professor who asked us, who are the Maya? And a student raised his hand and started talking about ancient people who built pyramids. After his lengthy answer, our professor said, 'no, I'm Maya. I'm here now. I'm not an ancient person and my culture isn't dead.'"

The Diversity and Inclusion Education Series, sponsored by OMWI, celebrates

national observances with speakers from a variety of occupations, cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds.

The next program will highlight the observance of the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., which falls on Monday, January 20, 2025. For more information about these programs, contact Jessica Hill, Joyce M. Hunter, or Kara-Renée Pepin. 🏠

Overcoming Change and Defensiveness Through Collaboration

By Rodi Adema

Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection



FDIC News is pleased to join Corporate University to publish the Leadership in Action series of articles exploring emerging leadership development topics that are important at the FDIC. Each month, we will feature an article on what it means to be a transformational leader – someone who influences people to think, speak, and act to make a positive difference in their lives and those of others.

Collaboration begins within the individual and then works its way out into the organization. When individuals are operating authentically with a nondefensive presence, collaboration is a catalyst for innovation and higher levels of problem solving." James W. Tamm

"The real problem is not conflict but rather the destructive way we deal with it. What if we tried a different approach . . . instead of escalating conflict or avoiding

it, what if we did the opposite . . . turned toward it and met it with curiosity and collaboration?" William Ury

Change brings challenges. Challenges can generate defensiveness, resulting in conflict. Likewise, conflict can cause us to be defensive. When we experience change, it can be disruptive to our beliefs, and we react to defend them. Cultural paradigm shifts stir our deep core values. We hold strong to our belief that we are right and defend our position at all costs. James W. Tamm, a former judge and expert in conflict resolution, indicates in his book, "Radical Collaboration," that defensiveness is always based on a fear, a fear of being insignificant, incompetent, or unlikable.

Defensiveness does not defend us from others. It arises within us to protect us from experiencing our own uncomfortable feelings and thoughts. In moments of disagreement, we get defensive, blame others, and behave in ways to avoid feeling that discomfort. Tamm states when we get defensive, we get rigid in our thinking, our IQ drops 20 points, and we become ineffective problem solvers.

FIVE ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO OVERCOME DEFENSIVENESS

In his work as a judge adjudicating multiple labor disputes, Tamm identified



Rodi Adema

five essential skills to overcome defensiveness, successfully manage conflict and build successful relationships. These skills are meant to help individuals navigate disagreements and foster positive, productive long-term relationships, especially in difficult situations. The five essential skills are:

- **Collaborative Intentions** – maintain an authentic, non-defensive presence, and make a personal commitment to mutual success in relationships.

see **Collaboration**, page 8

Collaboration, from page 7

- **Openness** – commit to both telling and listening to the truth. Create a climate of openness that allows all people in the relationship to feel safe enough to discuss concerns, solve problems, and deal directly with difficult issues.
- **Self-Accountability** – take responsibility for the circumstances, the choices made through action or failing to act, and the intended or unforeseen consequences.
- **Self-Awareness and Awareness of Others** – commit to knowing oneself deeply and a willingness to explore difficult interpersonal issues. Seek to understand the concerns, intentions, and motivations of others, as well as the culture and context of their circumstance.
- **Negotiating and Problem-Solving** – negotiate conflicts in a way that supports strong relationships and use interest-based problem-solving methods that promote a cooperative atmosphere. Avoid fostering subtle or unconscious competition.

Maintaining an authentic, nondefensive presence is the single most important thing you can do to increase your effectiveness when working to turn conflict into collaboration.

In a divisive environment, we believe that there are two versions of the issue, right and wrong versions. Instead of opposing opinions, using collaborative skills seeking what is possible, we gain a better insightful opinion reducing our defensiveness.

APPROACHES TO RESOLVE CONFLICT—POSSIBILITIES

Once you have learned and consistently implemented the five essential skills, William Ury, cofounder of Harvard's Program on Negotiation and an influential expert on negotiation and collaborative problem-solving, provides three approaches to resolve conflict in his book, *"Possible, How We Survive and (Thrive) in an Age of Conflict."*

- First, we need to get onto the balcony, a place of calm and perspective where we can keep our eyes on the bigger picture. It is a state of mind where you can gain clarity and create a vision forward. Going to the balcony gives the power to pause and reflect.
- Second is to build a bridge, an inviting way to cross the conflict divide. The courage to listen with empathy and understand their interests begins the connection. Check your biases at the door and leave your preconceptions behind. Openly be creative with all possible options.
- The third is the people around us who can help—colleagues, co-workers, team members, leaders, family, friends—our community. Ury refers to this as "the third side—people using the power of peers, adopting the perspective of the whole, and supporting a process of conflict transformation."

POSSIBILIST MINDSET

Ury promotes becoming a possibilist. A possibilist is one who has a passion for the possible. It is holding true to the belief in our human potential to get to yes;

our ability to deal with our differences constructively. A possibilist mindset is a curious, creative, and collaborative way of engaging with our differences. Be open to possibilities, be receptive to change, adopt a possibilist mindset.

COLLABORATIVE POSSIBILIST

Transforming conflict is larger than reaching agreement. It means transforming the way we deal with one another and our differences. It means transforming our relationships. Agreements are finite; they come and go. Transformation is relational and can continue long into the future. Agreements are outcomes; transformation is a process.

Be intentionally collaborative, go first, seek mutual interest, and consider all possibilities. Go to the balcony to get perspective, create a path to resolution, and include the community. Be a collaborative possibilist.

Rodi Adema is a DCP Field Supervisor, New England North Territory, and guest author. He adapted his article from the following sources that he recommends for further reading: "Radical Collaboration" by James W. Tamm and Ronald J. Luet and "Possible" by William Ury. 🏠

Library Subscriptions: Saving Staff Time and Saving the FDIC Money

By Kathleen Monti, IT Librarian

with input from Kay Lewandowska, Lead Librarian for Reference and Collection Management

Did you know that the FDIC Library is the central purchaser of commercial information products, including research journals? The library implements Directive 3020-02, which describes the framework for Divisions and Offices to request subscriptions. It also explains how they gain access to databases and data for research and analysis.

These acquisitions may range from a single print book priced as low as \$14.00 to a commercial data platform that could cost several million dollars per year to ensure access. If books aren't your thing, but journals, magazines, and digital resources are, the library allocates approximately \$250,000 annually to supply the FDIC with access to a collection of more than 1,000 research journals that encompass a wide range of subjects, including but not limited to economics, banking, knowledge management, and human resources. The subscriptions ensure that all employees have access to the most current scholarly, regulatory, and industry-related information available.

A key library goal is to collaborate with all teams, divisions, and offices to assess, budget, negotiate, and provide for future informational needs. Therefore, if you come across a resource, tool, database, dataset, or even an ebook that you believe should be included in our collection, please do not hesitate to contact the library by emailing library@fdic.gov.

A THOROUGH COST ANALYSIS

While the library's total budget represents less than 1 percent of the total FDIC operating budget, we work hard to be a good steward of our funding. Every purchase involves research and negotiation conducted by the Library Acquisitions Team. Before and after purchase, library staff strive to evaluate the true value of the information. An example of this is the annual cost analysis of our research journal subscriptions.

The library utilizes our Integrated Library System (ILS) to conduct an annual cost analysis of our research journal subscriptions. You may be acquainted



with our front-facing ILS through the library's catalog, however, it is capable of performing many additional functions. The ILS serves to monitor the library's inventory, orders, payments, and patrons.

Using the ILS, we can see what journal titles have the most hits from FDIC staff, how many searches patrons have run in each journal database in any given month, and the number of articles accessed or downloaded. For the annual cost analysis, we are most interested in "Total Item Requests" (TIR). This is the total number of times an item was requested (i.e. the full text or content was downloaded or viewed).

CALCULATING THE COST PER ARTICLE

Once the raw statistics have been generated, we can understand how much FDIC is paying each content provider per year compared to how much use FDIC staff are making of the products. With the TIR and the cost for a year of access in hand, we can determine how much we paid during FY2023-24 (October 2023-September 2024) per article:

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{Subscription Cost for 2024}) / \\ & (\text{Total Item Requests}) \\ & = \text{Cost per Article} \end{aligned}$$

Using EBSCOhost as an example and based on usage, the FDIC Library paid **\$8.25** per article from EBSCOhost during FY2023-24. When we repeat this process for ProQuest and Elsevier's ScienceDirect, we see the following:

- ProQuest Cost per Article: \$6.77
- ScienceDirect Cost per Article: \$23.93

Next, the IT Librarian determines how much each article would cost without our subscriptions, or the "Average Cost per Article." This is an important

factor because it will allow the library to determine how much we saved overall. The numbers get a little complicated because there is not a standard price for articles if purchased individually. We use a toolkit created in 2018 by the [Duke University Libraries](#), which places the average cost of an article at about \$32. We then account for inflation between 2018 and 2024 using the [Bureau of Labor Statistics' CPI Inflation Calculator](#), which sets the estimated average cost today at \$40.64. Additionally, we want to account for the time a library staff member would spend finding and purchasing an article, approximately 15 minutes. To find the cost of their time, we calculate the average librarian salary and break it down to fifteen-minute increments, which ends up being \$16.40.

By adding both numbers, we end up with the average cost per article in 2024: **\$57.04**.

CALCULATING THE COST SAVINGS

With that calculation completed, we can determine how much the library would spend on journal articles without our subscriptions. Again, this is very simple math:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Average Cost per Article in 2024} \\ & \times \text{Total Item Requests} \\ & = \text{Total Without Subscription} \end{aligned}$$

For EBSCOhost articles alone, the Library would have paid **\$414,623.76** in 2024. When we do the same calculations for the other content providers, we see similar results:

- ProQuest: \$393,347.84
- ScienceDirect: \$368,991.76

Finally, we calculate how much the library saved by purchasing subscriptions

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through our content providers:

Total Without Subscription
– *Subscription Cost for 2024*
= *Savings*

For EBSCOhost, the FDIC saved **\$393,347.84** in FY23–24 with our subscription. Here's how much we saved with our other subscriptions:

- ProQuest: \$346,643.70
- ScienceDirect: \$214,202.29

Altogether, the **FDIC Library saved \$954,193.83 in FY23–24** with subscriptions. While these databases are not our only sources of information, they represent a large collection of valuable information that can easily be used by staff across the agency. Not all content

providers collect usage statistics, but those that do can help the library estimate cost savings and demonstrate the value of having library resources available.

One more tidbit of interest. This is the fourth year that the IT Librarian has completed this analysis, and we are proud to share that in those four years, the library has saved, cumulatively, based on the analysis, nearly **\$4 million** with subscriptions over individual purchases.

FINAL THOUGHTS

You can learn more about scholarly journals and how to access them by reading our January 2023 news article: [Popular Scholarly Journals and How to Access Them](#).

We also offer e-routing to simplify search and access. E-routing notifies you via email when a new issue is published in a specified journal. You can receive the table of contents with direct links to articles in your inbox! It's really that easy!

This article is part of an ongoing series of contributions from the FDIC Library. 📖

Briefs

FDIC to Release Latest Quarterly Banking Profile

December 5, 2024

On Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 10 a.m. Eastern Time, FDIC Chairman Martin Gruenberg and senior staff will discuss third-quarter bank and thrift industry earnings and performance results released through the [Quarterly Banking Profile \(QBP\)](#) in a virtual press conference. Take a deep dive into the data about the current state of the U.S. banking sector by viewing [Thursday's news conference on YouTube](#).

View the FDIC Board of Directors December Meeting

December 11, 2024

The [FDIC Board of Directors](#) will meet at 10 a.m. December 17, 2024, at FDIC Headquarters, 550 17th St., NW, in Washington, D.C. Employees may [view the agenda](#) and are invited to view the live webcast of the meeting. Anyone requiring assistance to view the meeting should email disabilityprogram@fdic.gov. 🏠

In Memoriam

Derek Kenneth Thieme passed away peacefully on November 27, 2024 surrounded by his devoted family and friends. He was 37.

Born September 9, 1987 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Susan (Ford) Thieme and Kenneth D. Thieme, Derek spent his childhood joyfully exploring the outdoors and mastering card games such as Euchre—pastimes he continued to treasure throughout his life. Some of his most cherished memories involved spending time at his grandparents' home in Decatur, Indiana, where he helped his grandfather build a cabin that still stands today. During high school, he nurtured his passion for nature and adventure through school-sponsored camping and canoeing trips to the Boundary Waters in northern Minnesota. He later graduated from Homestead High School in 2006.

Derek earned his bachelor's degree in economics from Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in 2009. While in college, he studied abroad in both New Zealand and India, embracing his adventurous spirit with experiences like skydiving in New Zealand. Continuing his academic pursuits, Derek attended a prestigious fellowship program at George Mason University in Arlington, Virginia, earning his Master's in Economics in 2013. He then embarked on a professionally fulfilling 11-year career as an economist at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

In 2012, during his final semester of graduate school, Derek met the love of his life, Janine, at a mutual friend's New Year's Eve party. They quickly discovered the extraordinary connection between them and married on September 25, 2016, after three and a half joyful years together. Throughout their relationship, Derek and Janine shared a love of traveling, hiking, and creating a vibrant life surrounded by family and friends. In 2020 they welcomed their son, Theodore Carl ("Theo"), their greatest blessing. Two and a half years later, their blessings grew with the arrival of their daughter, Josephine Rose.

Six months after their engagement, Derek was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Following a successful surgery and round of treatment, Derek and Janine were

blessed with clear and stable scans and excellent health for many years afterwards. In April 2023 they discovered that the tumor had returned. After a difficult 18-month battle—including two additional craniotomies, treatment, and rehabilitation—Derek went home to God.

Derek's unwavering strength, kindness, humor, and deep gratitude for the love and blessings in his life remained constant through every challenge. Not long before his passing, he repeatedly told Janine, "I'm so blessed. I'm so lucky." His profound faith in God and dedication to bettering himself and the world around him set a lasting example for all who knew him.

Ask anyone who knew Derek, and they will tell you he had the most infectious and joyous laugh—the kind that filled the room with happiness. His silly sense of humor ranged from being the quintessential "fun dad" to Theo and Josephine, to crafting nonsensical Spanish puns with his sister, Megan. His determination and drive to achieve his goals were evident in every aspect of his life, including his completion of four marathons and one half-marathon.

Above all, Derek was a devoted husband to Janine and the best father to Theo and Josephine, showering them all with boundless and enduring love. Though his time with Theo and Josephine was far too brief, he imparted to them his insatiable curiosity, adventurous spirit, his love and thoughtfulness towards others and the world around him, and the most wonderful and goofy sense of humor.

Derek will forever be the brightest star in the skies of those who loved him. He is deeply and immeasurably loved and profoundly missed. May his memory be eternal.

Derek is survived by his beloved wife, Janine Bakalis Thieme, his son Theodore (4), and his daughter Josephine (2). He is also survived by his devoted parents, Susan and Kenneth Thieme; his sister Megan (Stuart) Chmielewski; his nieces, Vera and Audrey Chmielewski, his grandmother, Elaine Thieme, his in-laws, and his many aunts, uncles, cousins, and close friends.

The viewing will be held at Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, located



Derek Kenneth Thieme

at 2815 36th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007 on Monday, December 9, 2024 at 10:00 a.m., followed by the funeral service at 11:00 a.m. Internment following the service will take place at 1:30 p.m. at Stonewall Memory Gardens, located at 12004 Lee Hwy, Manassas, VA 20109. Luncheon to follow at Giorgio's Family Restaurant, located at 4394 Kevin Walker Dr., Montclair, VA 22025.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Theo and Josephine's VA 529 college fund. The information for donations is listed below:

<https://www.virginia529.com>

Theodore Gift ID: 18YK91S

Josephine Gift ID: 66MJO76

To send flowers or a memorial gift to the family of Derek Kenneth Thieme please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

DEREK'S FDIC COLLEAGUES HAD MUCH TO SAY ABOUT HIS LIFE AND WORK:

AHMAD SARSOOR (SENIOR FINANCIAL ECONOMIST - DIR):

I was friends with Derek.

Derek was a genuinely kind person. I first met him when he was a research assistant in the statistics branch. Even though we worked in different buildings and had never met in person, he went out of his way to introduce himself. I remember thinking how thoughtful that was. The following week, we went to lunch, and that's when our friendship truly began.

see **Thieme**, page 12

In Memoriam, *cont.*

Thieme, from page 11

The last time I spoke with Derek was earlier this year. He reached out after we hadn't talked for a while—ever since COVID had us all working from home. We ended up chatting for an hour. For the first 45 minutes, you wouldn't have known anything was wrong. He didn't bring up his condition until I asked how he was doing. Before that, he was laughing at my corny jokes and seemed excited about his work. That was Derek in a nutshell: always upbeat, always interested in you.

ALAN DEATON (DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DATA AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – DIR):

I knew Derek ever since he started with the FDIC in 2013. Even when he was a junior analyst, he was never afraid to challenge assumptions, and he always asked smart and insightful questions. During his time with us, Derek made many significant contributions to the work of the FDIC and had a positive influence on everyone around him. His warm and welcoming presence, quick wit and kind heart will be sorely missed.

RYAN T. SINGER (CHIEF, REGULATORY ANALYSIS SECTION – DIR):

I first met Derek around the time he began working for the FDIC. We worked in different Sections within DIR, but his open and genial nature meant that he easily established strong relationships with others. Later I had the privilege of being his manager in the Regulatory Analysis Section. I always found Derek to be an incredibly kind person. But, as his manager I also found him to be incredibly dedicated to his work, never shy about speaking up if it served the project he was working on, and always willing to help friends and colleagues in need. The loss of his force of character and generous spirit is deeply felt by those who knew and worked with him.

CHAD M. BOGGAN (CHIEF, DATA STRATEGY SECTION – DIR):

"I worked with Derek in the DIR Data Strategy Section and as a co-member of the DIR Diversity Working Group. Derek was in Data Strategy when he first got his diagnosis. With every right

to be distraught or angry, Derek instead maintained who he had been all along, a genuinely good and pleasant person to be around. Kind, professional, and truly concerned about doing right by the Corporation and anyone he was working with. Derek also showed himself to be a devoted husband and father. He spoke fondly of his family, and the joy he drew from having them in his life was evident. The FDIC was fortunate to have had Derek among our ranks. He will truly be missed."

AIDEN W. LAWSON (ECONOMIC ANALYST – DIR):

"I had the privilege of working with Derek for my first three years at the FDIC. From my first few days he made himself available as a resource and colleague who I was able to learn and grow from. He always offered insightful, pointed feedback on the projects we worked on together and was able to provide unique perspectives and questions that I hadn't considered. More than that, though, Derek immediately made me feel like I belonged on the Regulatory Analysis team. He wanted to get to know me and always valued my input. I always loved hearing about whatever he and his family and pets got up to that previous weekend whenever we'd be on the phone. My heart goes out to them. Derek was a good, good man and I, along with everyone in our section, will deeply miss him."

ERICA L. THOLMER (SPECIAL ADVISOR AND ASSISTANT – DCP):

"Even though we had both worked in the Division of Insurance and Research for quite some time before we met, Derek and I first became acquainted at an external testing facility after sitting for the CFA exam. We "clicked" immediately. His friendly, positive, and upbeat energy was compelling. After deciding to study for the next level of the exam together, I became quickly impressed with how incredibly intelligent—and patient—he was during our study sessions. Derek was a great listener—I felt free to be myself around him and I could always count on him for a belly aching laugh. As good friends often do, we learned from one

another and challenged each other to operate outside of our respective comfort zones: I encouraged him to join DIR's Diversity Working Group (DWG), and he encouraged me to join Toastmasters in return. He soon became just as committed to the DWG as I was and took up a cause that I feel strongly about as his own. I learned a lot from my friend and colleague, Derek, and I will miss him so much. He was the kind of person who made the world a better place just by being in it."

ANGELA HINTON (SENIOR FINANCIAL ANALYST – DIR):

"Derek and I served as RA's together in the Statistics Branch of DIR. There were just a few RA's in Virginia Square, and we all became friends who would often pull up our chairs in the middle of our cubicles to catch up and have a few laughs. Derek's and my professional and personal lives paralleled one another's from then on. We received our permanent positions at the same time, we each moved downtown where we sat down the hall from one another, and we each built families that would become friends. This relationship with Derek was a privilege. There was not an unkind or selfish bone in Derek's body. He was someone I could look up to professionally, with his dedication and knowledge, and personally, with his lack of ego and absolute adoration of his family. He was destined to be a father – he often joked that he was a kid trapped in an adult's body. His curiousness and adventurous spirit made him the kind of father who could easily join Theo in an imaginary world he had built and effortlessly build upon it with him. He was that colleague that sang his own rendition of "Margaritaville" while playing the guitar at a retirement party. Despite the unimaginably difficult circumstances he was honest about facing, he was unwaveringly positive and a light to all who knew him. His absence will be felt, and he'll be missed." 🙏