



Building a Legacy of Caring

by Steven J. Huston, President

It's not just about interest rates, fees, and office hours. We don't win customers solely because we have convenient ATMs or nearby branches. The real story of our success involves a great deal more.

An American Bankers Association study a few years back found that more than half of bank customers believe that having a relationship of trust with their financial institution is more important than getting the best return on their money.

TRUST, in other words, wins out over price. BANKWEST believes that trust is built on the intangibles of banking – the stuff that doesn't necessarily make it onto the bank's bottom line. High ethical standards, commitment to our community and concern for the welfare of others are keys to building that trust.

I recently heard a customer say that it's so fun to come and do business at BANKWEST because everyone is so willing to help and nice. "BANKWEST has a solid banking system and positive team spirit," Arvid Gutzwiller remarked.

You know that we help families buy homes, help small businesses get off the ground, and that lending leads to new jobs and healthy local economies. But these financial investments aren't the entire story. It's our leadership and volunteer work that really makes the difference.

Our staff is committed to sharing with our fellow citizens the responsibility of creating and sustaining a quality environment for our families and businesses. Their involvement in the community we serve is utmost and foremost – caring about our neighbors, offering them support, and helping to make our communities a safer and better place to live.

We are out there putting in time and financial resources to support the work and activities of youth, fund special projects, deliver meals-on-wheels, participate on Community Health Foundation Board and Chamber of Commerce boards, teach Sunday school and financial management skills to children to name a few.

I am tremendously proud of our staff for their volunteering efforts and what they are achieving. My mother used to say, wherever you live, make it the best place it can be. I emphasize and want every staff person to know that he or she has something of value to give. That's the reason BANKWEST implemented values and expectations that we all strive to live by.

We're pleased to have been building a legacy of caring for over 50 years. We will continue to make banking a more widely understood truth: that valuing and caring for people is what really makes a difference.