



2025 Next Generation in Banking Leadership Award Finalists

Congratulations to the finalists for the 2025 Next Generation in Banking Leadership Award! The winner will be honored Oct. 2-3 at the NextGen conference.



MALLORY FARRELL

Senior Vice President, Chief Operations Office
Sullivan Bank

As a member of the Sullivan Bank leadership team, Mallory Farrell has been integral to streamlining bank operations that have enhanced customer relationships. She handled the bank's negotiation of its core system contract and oversaw the operations establishment of new branch locations in St. Clair, Eureka and Jefferson City. During her tenure as chief operations officer, the bank has grown in assets from \$477 million to \$1.2 billion. Her demonstrated ability to streamline for efficiency earned her the honor of being the bank's first leader of its "Simplify" cultural pillar in 2021. Farrell is a past board member of the Meramec Community Mission, a food pantry and thrift store serving less fortunate individuals.



JOHN GIDEON

Executive Vice President, Senior Loan Officer
Heritage Bank of the Ozarks, Lebanon

John Gideon has made his mark as a community banker. As a member of the Heritage Bank of the Ozarks leadership team, Gideon oversees lending operations and the bank's credit risk strategy. He collaborates with leadership to drive growth, profitability and community engagement. With a deep understanding of banking's role in strengthening economic growth, Gideon shares his perspectives with lawmakers through his participation in MBA Target Banker visits and MBA Washington Visits. Under Gideon's leadership as board president of Lebanon Friends of the Fort, the Mid-Missouri Chapter of AUSA (Association of the United States Army) has been recognized nationally as Best Chapter of the Year for two consecutive years.



KELLY HOHE

Vice President, Regional Branch Manager
FCNB Bank, Rolla

Kelly Hohe has modeled resilience, adaptability and initiative since joining FCNB Bank in 2019. Her positive and professional style reflects her strategic approach and knowledge of people-first banking, and her leadership has affected multiple facets of the bank, including marketing, community engagement and operational performance. Hohe is developing a bank training program designed to unify branch and departmental operations and practices, improve customer care consistency and drive profitability. A 2024 graduate of MBA's Banking Leadership Missouri, Hohe currently is a member of MBA's Women Bankers Committee. She is actively involved in local Chambers of Commerce, Wreaths Across America and Court Appointed Special Advocate program.



ASHLEIGH LEENERTS

Senior Vice President, Human Resources and Community Reinvestment Act Officer
Royal Banks of Missouri, St. Louis

A lifelong commitment to her community and her passion to help others has been the cornerstone of Ashleigh Leenerts' banking career. As a member of the executive leadership team at Royal Banks of Missouri, Leenerts leads the bank's community development services, volunteer activities and CRA efforts to meet federal Community Reinvestment Act requirements. Leenerts and bank employees provide financial literacy training to low-income youth through the bank's relationship with Harambee Youth Training. They have opened accounts for the youth, teaching them how to use their accounts and debit cards, how to save and how to avoid fraud. In the last four years, the 100 annual youth participants have gone from 95% unbanked to 100% banked.