

CBAI E-Newsletter

Connected to Community Banking
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LATEST NEWS

Complete CBAI's Directors' Compensation Survey by February 28

CBAI's Directors' Compensation Survey is now open! **Complete it by February 28 to receive FREE results!** CBAI and Risk Strategies|ZALE Financial Group have teamed up with a new firm to offer the 2025 Compensation Surveys! Featuring a new format, you'll gain even more beneficial data and valuable resources geared specifically toward your community bank to give you a competitive edge in recruiting, retaining and rewarding the best. A nationally renowned and respected firm, Blanchard Consulting Group creates two separate surveys each year so each one takes less time and the information is organized more effectively. Participants receive Illinois-only data as well as national findings! **Look for the Salary & Cash Compensation Survey in May.** As always, the survey is sponsored by Risk Strategies|ZALE Financial Group, so results are FREE for participants! Email your completed survey to surveys@blanchardc.com or [utilize the secure upload](#).

[Complete the Survey »](#)

Episode Ten: CBSC "Why I Did It" Podcast Featuring Wayne Miller of ICBA Ventures

Wayne Miller, SVP of ICBA Ventures, explains how ICBA's ThinkTECH Accelerator Program identifies, evaluates and mentors community bank-friendly, early-stage fintechs.

[View Episode Ten »](#)

Opponents of the Illinois Interchange Law Hedge Their Bets With Legislation to Repeal It

A bill was introduced late Tuesday, January 28, in the Illinois House of Representatives seeking to repeal the Interchange Fee Prohibition Act. The legislation, initiated by the Community Bankers Association of Illinois (CBAI) and introduced by Rep. Margaret Croke, chairperson of the House Financial Institutions and Licensing Committee, is the latest twist in an ongoing battle over the IFPA, which became law in June. This new legislation, consisting of a single sentence, simply calls for the repeal of the Interchange Fee Prohibition Act "effective immediately." Supporters are planning to introduce a similar bill in the Illinois Senate at a later date. That bill will be introduced by Mark Walker, chairperson of the Senate Financial Institutions Committee.

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March 3 Is the Deadline for Submissions to CBAI's Foundation Essay Contest Scholarship Program!

Time is running out! The deadline to submit essays is March 3, 2025! The CBAI Foundation for Community Banking provides \$21,000 in scholarship funds for top high school seniors statewide. One semi-finalist may be chosen from each of the CBAI groups

via an essay-writing contest. A \$1,000 scholarship can be awarded to a student in 11 of CBAI's 12 groups along with \$500 to a second-place person in each group, which assures geographical uniformity of winners. The statewide winner will win \$1,000 a year for up to four years of higher education. And, as in previous years, the high school of the overall winner will receive \$500. Your bank's chance of sponsoring a winner is better than ever! It costs nothing for your bank to be involved and there are "no strings attached"! However, the banks reaping the greatest benefits are those that offer local scholarships in addition to the \$21,000 the Foundation has made available for awards statewide. For more information, please contact [Cortni](#).

Community Banking Week is April 6-12, 2025! Request Your Free Marketing Kit!

April 6-12, 2025, is the 35th anniversary of Community Banking Week in Illinois! This year's theme is "Community Banks – Where Community Comes First." Celebrate the independent spirit that is the hallmark of locally-run banks. For your FREE digital marketing kit, contact [Cortni](#) today! Marketing resources, exclusive for CBAI member banks, include advertisements, lobby poster, social media graphic, PSAs, news release, radio scripts, letter to the editor and more!

Register Now for CBAI's 2025 Capital Conference!

CBAI welcomes community bankers from across Illinois to join together in Springfield for our annual show-of-force gathering to advocate for the community banking profession in our state's capital. **CBAI's 2025 Capital Conference is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2025, and will be held at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel in downtown Springfield, IL.** Please join us for a luncheon and legislative briefing as well as heading back to the Capitol to meet with your state senators and representatives with a focus on educating members of the General Assembly about the community banking profession and our legislative concerns. We will finish the day with a legislative reception. The fee is \$100 for your institution and covers all employees, directors and officers that you want to bring.

[Register Today »](#)

Registration is Open for CBAI's 43rd Annual Call on Washington!

CBAI's Call on Washington will be held on May 12-15, 2025. Please plan to join us for this event to LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD! Celebrating its 43rd year, CBAI bankers from across Illinois will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to call on their members of Congress and banking regulators to support issues of importance to Illinois community banks.

[Read More and Register »](#)

Trump Administration Suspends Federal Funds Freeze Memo, Says Pause Is Still in Effect

The Trump administration rescinded the original memo outlining its freeze for some federal agency grant and loan programs while noting the funding pauses spelled out in previous executive orders remain in effect. The Office of Management and Budget rescission applies to a memo issued to the heads of executive departments and agencies on Monday that said federal agencies must temporarily pause activities related to obligation or disbursement of federal financial assistance. A subsequent OMB memo issued Tuesday said the funding freeze does not apply to funds for small businesses, farmers and similar programs, noting the pause is limited to programs and activities affected by President Donald's Trump's executive orders.

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Serving everyone in our communities, in every way we can.

FHLBank Chicago is committed to providing products, solutions, and services that support our members' evolving business needs and help their communities thrive.

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Fed Maintains Rates Following Three Rounds of Cuts

The Federal Open Market Committee voted to maintain the target range for the federal funds rate at a range of 4.25% to 4.5%, citing an uncertain economic and inflation outlook. FOMC members voted unanimously to hold target rates steady. The Fed's rate-setters said they are strongly committed to supporting maximum employment and returning inflation to the Fed's 2% objective. The decision to leave rates unchanged follows three consecutive rate cuts to round out 2024, which were the first cuts for the Fed since 2020.

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Report: More Credit Union M&A Deals Failing as Acquisitions Increase

As credit union mergers and acquisitions have increased, so have terminations of announced transactions, according to a recent report. According to a report in Tyfone citing S&P Global Market Intelligence data, five M&A deals in which a credit union would have been the acquirer failed in 2024, including one transaction involving a bank seller. The report cites the impact of regulatory hangups, changes in the timeline to regulatory approval, member or board member sentiment, and core mission differences. The problem of credit union acquisitions of community banks has received increased attention from policymakers, including from the FDIC, which last year approved a statement of policy on bank mergers that explicitly states that additional scrutiny may be needed for deals involving credit unions.

[Read Tyfone Report »](#)

[Read FDIC Statement of Policy »](#)

Senate Working Group to Focus on Reforming Financial Regulations

The Senate Banking Committee announced the formation of a working group that will focus on addressing regulatory transparency and reducing regulatory burdens. The Reforming Federal Financial Regulatory Agencies Working Group will be chaired by Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.). "Our goal is to ensure that regulators operate with the same transparency, accountability and fairness we demand from the institutions they oversee," Tillis said.

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CFTC to Hold Roundtables on Digital Assets

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission announced it will soon begin a series of public roundtables on several evolving issues, including digital assets. The CFTC said that, over the next several months, it will engage with industry leaders, market participants and public interest groups through transparent public roundtables to provide the CFTC with information and the latest data. The Securities and Exchange Commission last week launched a crypto task force to develop a clear regulatory framework for crypto assets. SEC Commissioner Hester Peirce will lead the task force.

[Read Roundtable Details »](#)

[Read Crypto Task Force News Release »](#)

Registration Now Open for FHLB Chicago's 2025 Member Meetings

FHLBank Chicago's complimentary 2025 Member Meetings are coming to a city near you this spring! Attendees will have an exclusive opportunity to enhance their business competitiveness by leveraging industry-relevant insights from meetings hosted conveniently in the region they serve. Additionally, meetings offer a chance to connect with top-level management, dedicated sales directors from FHLBank Chicago, and local peers in the industry. Benefits include a first look at FHLBank Chicago products and solutions and the inside scoop of recommended product leveraging techniques; expert economic insights to help navigate the 2025 financial landscape; an opportunity to gain balance sheet best practice strategies; and the opportunity to network with industry peers from across Illinois and Wisconsin.

[Register Today »](#)

ThinkTECH Accelerator Program Visits Available

Bankers can still secure an individual bank visit with ICBA's latest cohort for its award-winning ThinkTECH Accelerator program to participate in ThinkTECH Thursdays group bank sessions. ICBA kicked off its eighth iteration of the program on January 7, bringing six new companies to Atlanta to begin 10 weeks of virtual visits with community bankers. The featured companies have solutions designed to help community bankers remain compliant; stay vigilant against check fraud; integrate new technologies to grow their business; provide financial planning resources for families and young adults; implement new AI; and power their commercial lending process.

[Schedule a Visit »](#)



Risk Strategies: Maximizing Earnings: New Trends and Opportunities in BOLI for 2025 Webinar

Join Risk Strategies|ZALE Financial Group for an insightful webinar on February 18, 2025, at 9 a.m. CST for CBAI member bank CEOs, presidents and CFOs, where they'll explore the latest advancements in Bank-Owned Life Insurance (BOLI). Designed for banks both with and without existing BOLI programs, this session will focus on how recent changes in rates, laws, and policies have made BOLI structures more efficient than ever. They'll cover how BOLI can serve as a dual-purpose tool for executive recruitment and retention while also offsetting the rising costs of employee benefits. Additionally, they'll demonstrate how to maximize your bank's investment by taking advantage of these new design enhancements. With improved liquidity and better yields now available, there's never been a better time to review your options and capitalize on BOLI's potential.

[Register for This Webinar »](#)

Ncontracts: What is a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) and How Does It Work?

Is your financial institution prepared to weather the storms ahead with a business impact analysis (BIA)? We've all heard the phrase, "Hope for the best and prepare for the worst." For financial institutions, preparing for the worst isn't just good advice; it's essential to the safety and security of the organization, its employees, its investments and its customers. Conducting a business impact analysis is the first step to preparing for business interruptions and disruptions by identifying how they could impact your financial institution.

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Wolters Kluwer: Strategies to Pledge Electronic Capital at the Federal Reserve Bank

To stay ahead in digital lending, liquidity is essential – but achieving its full potential requires careful planning. Without Federal Reserve certification or a clear strategy for managing electronic collateral, you may face risks and missed opportunities to optimize your assets. Join on the webinar *Strategies to Pledge Electronic Collateral to the Federal Reserve Bank*, on February 19, 2025, at 11 a.m. CT and gain actionable insights from industry experts Craig Focardi of Celent, DJ Steva of Vibrant Credit Union, Amy Pinson of Park National Bank, McKenzie Money of Zions Bancorporation, and Stephen Bradley of Wolters Kluwer.

[Register Now »](#)

ADVANTAGE, Powered by JMFA: Who Really Uses Overdraft Services? The Surprising Reality

Consumers rely on overdraft services to manage unexpected expenses across all income levels and demographics. However, many community banks often overlook how many of their customers would benefit from access to a reliable overdraft service. When it comes to overdrafts, many assume these services mainly support financially vulnerable individuals. However, recent data challenges this view, revealing that a substantial number of higher-income individuals also feel financially strained.

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New Innovation Column to Appear in CBAI's *Banknotes* Magazine

Inspired by the CBSC Innovation Committee, *Innovation Curation* is a new regular column that will appear in each issue of *Banknotes* beginning with the March 1, 2025, edition. As the name implies, it will sift through articles about innovation strategies, technologies and case studies to identify the most promising solutions for community banks. We hope that bankers will gain actionable insights from sharing their experiences with the innovation process.

CBIS: Double Take: The Importance of Verification Interacting Online

The online world experiences ever-evolving threats that require diligence in working with and utilizing the tools that can make our lives easier. A more recent implementation seen by criminals is the use of Artificial intelligence (AI) deepfakes in cyber-crime. These involve the use of AI technologies to create realistic but fabricated media, including but not limited to images, audio and video to deceive, manipulate or harm individuals or organizations.

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CBSC Preferred Providers



I DECIDED TO PARTNER WITH SHAZAM.

SHAZAM Core Services will help build your business, improve processes and gain efficiencies. We offer a flexible, end-to-end platform with configurable ancillary solutions.

MORE OF THE LATEST NEWS

Anthony Cole Training Group: 25 Sales Tips for 2025

Here are 25 sales tips to help you prospect smarter, plan effectively, and sell with confidence in 2025! Whether you're looking to build stronger client relationships, work on your time management, or improve your selling strategies, these tips will set you up for a winning year. Let's make 2025 your best sales year yet!

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Seeking a New Website Hosting Provider? CBAI Can Help!

CBAI has been providing web hosting services to banks for more than 25 years. CBAI's hosting services provide banks' websites with a complete compliant web hosting package, including a customized infrastructure to fully support all security requirements of .BANK, .INSURANCE and other fTLD hosting security parameters. Hosting services include a fully-managed Virtual Private Server (VPS) with AWS and dedicated static IP that keeps your website separate with its own partitioned server area, meaning that you are running your very own operating system (Linux), storage space and RAM to keep your site performance stable and reliable. So, whether your site was created by a developing firm or a private developer, CBAI provides the tools and environment needed to ensure your site is secure and top performing.

[Learn More »](#)

Highlight Your Small Business Customer in *Banknotes* Magazine

Do you have a small business customer you would like to see featured in CBAI's *Banknotes* magazine? We want to spotlight your unique, local businesses with a special story! Contact [Valerie](#) today for more information. Check out our latest Small Business Spotlight from a recent edition of *Banknotes*, featuring Isaac's Coffee Shop, a customer of First National Bank in Arenzville!

[Read More »](#)

Share Your Community Bank Happenings with CBAI!

Did you recently hire a new employee or award a promotion? Did a longtime employee celebrate a work anniversary or retire? Does your bank have a new community service project or event? We want to know about it! Tag CBAI in your social media post or send an email to [Valerie](#) with your bank's news. We want to include it on our social media pages and in the Member News section of *Banknotes* magazine!



CONSUMER LENDING INSTITUTE

February 24 - 26, 2025
CBAI, Springfield



AUDITING REGULATION E & REGULATION DD

March 4, 2025
CBAI, Springfield

Learn essential audit strategies
for maintaining compliance with
critical banking regulations.

CBAI EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Training the Credit Analyst Level One & Level Two to Be Offered in Springfield

CBAI is pleased to offer **Training the Credit Analyst Level One on February 12 & 13, 2025**, and **Training the Credit Analyst Level Two on March 12 & 13, 2025**, at the CBAI Headquarters in Springfield. **Training the Credit Analyst Level One** is a course designed to address the needs of bank personnel with minimum experience in analyzing commercial and consumer loan requests or no formal training in accounting and credit analysis. This course begins by teaching the principles of accounting and assumptions utilized to prepare financial statements and tax returns. The course then progresses to a detailed review of financial statements including the balance sheet, income statement, statement of retained earnings, statement of cash flow and notes to the financial statements. It then focuses on analyzing the financial condition of commercial and industrial companies including companies that own commercial real estate for sale or lease. **Training the Credit Analyst Level Two** is a course designed to address the needs of credit analysts who successfully completed Training the Credit Analyst Level One or have a minimum of one to two years of experience as a credit analyst or commercial lender. This course reinforces the credit skills of current credit analysts and commercial/consumer lenders in all aspects of credit analysis. **Jeffery Johnson**, president and founder of Bankers Insight Group, Atlanta, Georgia, leads both seminars.

[Register Today »](#)

CBAI's 2025 IRA Institute Scheduled for February 11-12 at the Northfield Center in Springfield

CBAI is pleased to offer the **"2025 IRA Institute" scheduled for February 11-12, 2025, at the Northfield Center in Springfield**. This two-day program begins with the basics and builds from there to an intermediate level. Individuals who attend IRA training events often find the training lacks the detail necessary to really grasp the rules. With a two-day format, this program allows you to take the time to get comfortable with the rules, to ask questions about "How?," "What if?," "Why?," and, just as importantly, "Why not?" While not attempting to make you a tax advisor, this program looks at the tax implications that apply to IRA contributions and IRA distributions. You'll gain the confidence to answer questions vs. when to suggest someone seek the advice of a tax professional.

[Register Today »](#)

CBAI's "C" Conference to Be Held February 19 in Springfield

CBAI's "C" Conference, scheduled for February 19, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, was developed for C-level community bankers. This exciting conference includes inspiring and educational general sessions, concurrent sessions, and an opportunity to network with your peers. CBAI's "C" Conference educational sessions were designed to benefit CEOs, CFOs, COOs and senior lenders. **A complimentary networking reception is being held February 18th from 6 – 9 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza bar on the second floor of the hotel.**

General session topics include *Asset/Liability Management in Today's Environment* with Deon Perryman, managing director, The Baker Group, Oklahoma City, OK, and ***Critical Information for Community Bank Executives*** with Greyson Tuck, attorney and consultant, Gerrish Smith Tuck, Memphis, TN. The conference also offers two concurrent education sessions and a roundtable networking session. You don't want to miss this event – designed exclusively for the community banker!

[Register Today »](#)

CBAI Educational Calendar

