



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

AVIN

BANK

NORWICH

We will remain a strong, mutual financial institution where valued employees provide personalized service that exceeds customer and community expectations.

## CONNECTING TO OUR CUSTOMERS, FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS'

### AS A NEW YEAR HAS BEGUN,

the world-wide pandemic remains and we all continue to be impacted by it, both professionally and personally.

One of the ongoing effects of the pandemic is the interruption of our community's ability to meet and interact with each other. As we all adjusted to this new reality, it was striking to realize how we take for granted our ability to stay connected; with friends, families and in our business lives, our customers and each other.

We have been very fortunate that throughout this pandemic, we have found ways to provide for our customers by remaining open every day and serving our banking community in both traditional and new ways. We met with customers in person by appointment banking and helped them with their banking needs through the windows of our drive-ups. We also were able to educate and encourage many of our customers to bank in new ways by using our online and mobile platforms and our Dime Bank Customer Solutions Center.

Our lending team has connected with many of our business customers and other area business owners to facilitate and secure loans through the Small Business Administration's Payroll Protection Program, including many applicants who were unable to get assistance from their current banks. These efforts helped stabilize many local businesses and protected thousands of jobs in our communities.

Finally, we've continued to honor our bank-wide pledge to always give back by increasing the number of grants provided by the Dime Bank Foundation in 2020 and our support of many communitywide events, even taking advantage of the opportunity to participate in and enjoy a new landscape of virtual events.

While adjusting our capabilities to serve our customers in a new world, we also managed to add to the proud tradition of Dime Bank by extending our geographic footprint into the Greater Hartford region. In December, we opened new branches in Glastonbury and Manchester, returning community banking to an area that no longer had this option due to aggressive banking consolidation.

And by doing so, we have continued to shout that real community banking is much different from any other kind of banking. Real community banking – knowing your customer, lending to local businesses who cater to local customers and a bank-wide promise to always give back to the community – is a commitment that will always stand tall, both in good times and bad; we confirmed this promise again in 2020.

To our Board of Directors, Corporators, employees and most of all our customers, thank you for your continued support of our community bank.

Best regards,

Nicholas Caplanson, President and CEO

## CONNECTING TO CUSTOMERS IN NEW WAYS

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LIKE MOST BUSINESSES, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SHIFTED MANY OF THE WAYS DIME BANK CONDUCTED BUSINESS IN 2020.

Although we were forced to make changes to the way we interacted with customers in the past year, we are very proud of the fact that Dime Bank, not even for one day, closed our doors to our customers. In mid-March, when it became evident that the COVID-19 virus had entered our communities, we began making changes that would protect both our customers, employees and vendors. Our lobby traffic was confined to banking by appointment only while we began handling the majority of our customer transactions through our drive-up windows, with our retail staff providing a full menu of services to customers.

One of the positive by-products of the pandemic is that many current and new customers have begun to discover new ways to bank with Dime. Over the past few years, we have implemented many technological enhancements designed to give our customers easier access to and more options to experience their banking with Dime and they have proven to be successful. Since the start of the pandemic, we have seen the level of our online and mobile banking business rise dramatically. As an example, the use of our mobile deposit feature has increased by 87% over the course of the year.

Additionally, popular new video tutorials were issued on Dime's social media platforms which answered common online banking questions such as "How do I make a mobile deposit?" or "How do I complete a transfer?"



d new customers over new ways to Dime."

to assist long standing customers who wanted to transition over to a new way of banking. You may not be able to teach a dog new tricks but that does not apply to Dime's forward-thinking banking customers.

As the pandemic approached our area, Dime began to also make changes internally to similarly protect our employees. As early as March 22, Dime began relocating employees to and from our branches and corporate office and several employees began working from home offices to ensure that proper social distancing standards were met. Wearing a mask became a requirement for all employees at Dime, regardless of position or function.

All of these changes were done as we attempted to provide our customers and employees with a sense of "business as usual" during very unusual times. And hopefully, if you've been to one of our branches recently, you've been able to tell that underneath the mask, you are being helped with a smile.







### CONNECTING A COMMUNITY THROUGH ITS ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES

#### STEPPING INTO MEL'S DOWNTOWN CREAMERY

in Pawcatuck, CT is like taking a step back in time. With the feel of a 1950's soda shop, Mel's serves up an experience that is just as sweet as their ice cream. Owner Melanie Goggin opened Mel's in 2012, after her mother learned the shop was for sale from what turned out to be a fortuitous school bus stop conversation.

Melanie is "a firm believer that a business is only successful if the community wants it to be." Anyone who has heard of Mel's has probably first heard, by reputation, just how much they give back. It's those connections that Melanie has made through goodwill that has made her business the success it is today, with a recent expansion of a second location in the town of Colchester.

Upon her expansion, Melanie learned that her previous bank would be closing their branches in both Pawcatuck and Colchester, the two communities she lives and works in. It was at that time that an existing connection came to her aide. Samantha Bazydlo, lifelong community member and Branch Manager of Dime Bank's Westerly branch, contacted Melanie to invite her to learn about Dime.

With branches in both Westerly and Colchester, Dime provided a convenient and more importantly, local option with their own long-standing commitment to community that paired well with Melanie's business model. It was at that time that Melanie brought over her business relationship to Dime, began working with both branches, and met Chuck Maynard, Branch Manager of Dime's Colchester branch.

Chuck and Melanie quickly formed a connection based on their common passion for giving back. "When I met Melanie, I immediately saw how she genuinely believed in businesses working together towards a common goal. I felt not only lucky to have her as a customer, but in my role as Colchester Business Association President, excited to help her make connections with other business owners in Colchester."

According to Melanie, "Working with Dime, even during the pandemic has been great. What's most notable is that the experience has never changed and the relationships we have formed are real, not transactional." Mel's continues to serve as a beacon of hope during the pandemic, offering curbside pickup and "sundae kits" to take home. "We consider ourselves really lucky to be able to provide a bit of happiness to our customers at a time where it is in such short supply and in a manner where they feel safe and comfortable."

In many ways, like Dime, Mel's Downtown Creamery has been an essential service during the pandemic. As Melanie said best, "anyone can give you an ice cream, but when it comes from a business committed to taking care of its neighbors, it tastes a little bit sweeter."

Melanie Goggin, Owner Mel's Downtown Creamery Inset Photo: Melanie Goggin, Chuck Maynard, Assistant Vice President, Colchester Branch Manager, Dime Bank

"...anyone can give you an ice cream, but when it comes from a business committed to taking care of its neighbors, it tastes a little bit sweeter."

2020 DIME BANK 5 ANNUAL REPORT





## CONNECTED TO OUR ROOTS

#### SET IN THE SCENIC,

rolling hills of South Glastonbury, a renowned local family farm stands out among its neighbors. Founded in 1910 by the Preli family, Belltown Hill Orchards is a 200-acre enterprise featuring pick-yourown orchards, a vineyard, and a farm store and bakery.

Originally built by family patriarch Louis Preli who emigrated to South Glastonbury from Northern Italy, the farm is now owned by brothers Donald Jr., and Michael Preli, and joined by family including their wives, sisters, sons, daughter, nephews and even mother Donna, who all work together on the farm.

Over the years, the farm steadily grew. To help its growth, the family worked with a number of different banks but always preferred working with a communitybased bank because in many ways, they reminded the family of their own origins.

"One of our earliest principles was to always look out for our customers' satisfaction before anything else," said current co-owner Donald Preli Jr. "We were used to working with banks who felt this same way, banks who understood our business and knew us by name when we stopped in." As the farm continued to expand, the family held true its commitment to customer service but observed that as banks began to consolidate and get bigger, the service they were used to began to fade away.

"We noticed that as the banks got bigger, we became less and less important to them and eventually we were just another account," said Donald Jr.

Ana Sofia Mendonca, Dime's Assistant Branch Manager in Glastonbury, felt the same way. Sofia worked with the Prelis and Belltown Orchards at a small, community bank for a number of years but likewise, saw her day-to-day interactions with customers change for the worse each time her bank was acquired by someone new. When Sofia decided to return to her community banking roots and join Dime Bank's new location in Glastonbury, the Prelis and Belltown Hill Orchards soon followed.

"We were excited to learn that a community bank like Dime was opening in Greater Hartford" shared Donald Jr. "And having worked closely with Sofia, we knew that we were going to again receive the customer service that is only provided by a community bank like Dime."

L-R: Donald Preli Jr., Co-Owner Belltown Hill Orchards, Ana Sofia Mendonca, Glastonbury Assistant Branch Manager, Dime Bank

"We were excited to learn that a community bank like Dime was opening in Greater Hartford."

Over the past year, many people, both local and from across Connecticut, have visited Belltown Orchards to purchase fresh fruit and produce. The Preli family has noticed that one positive result of the pandemic is that many people are returning to their own kitchens and learning how to cook for themselves again.

Likewise, Dime Bank is noticing that many people who have been taken for granted for too long by their bank, are choosing how to bank again and are choosing community banking. Because as the rich histories of both Belltown Orchards and Dime Bank show, while times change, values never do.

# CONNECTING BY BEING ACCOUNTABLE

#### ED MUENZNER, founder and

owner of Ed Muenzner CPA, LLC, has a long history with Dime Bank. For over fifteen years, Ed has enjoyed a banking relationship with Dime, both through his own business and by referring Dime to his clients when a situation called for it.

"I've been working with Dime Bank myself for a long time and based on the ease of doing business with them, I am happy to refer my clients to them when it is appropriate for their banking needs," said Ed. "I've been impressed with Dime as more than a bank. We do a lot in the community such as helping at community events and serving on Boards, and almost every time, we see Dime there as well." In today's busy world, Sunday mornings can mean an early workout or a trip for coffee. But a particular Sunday morning a few months ago meant something totally different for Ed.

Ed was in the process of helping one of his clients apply for a Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Program Ioan with a large national bank. After three weeks of frustration with a process that was time-wasting, Ed directed his client to Dime, his own trusted local bank.

That decision fast tracked the process for Ed and his clients in ways he couldn't have expected. "I reached out and sent some applications to Dime's Chris Gauthier, Vice President, Senior Commercial Lender, on a weekend. Chris said he would review the paperwork and asked if we could talk Sunday morning. When I told him the only time I could do so would be as early as 6:30 a.m.," Chris said, "I'll call you then."

After their Sunday morning discussion, the process to apply for the loan was

completed in less than 24 hours. Then according to Ed, Chris asked a surprising question – "Do you have any other clients I can help?" Ed immediately referred four more clients who were also having difficulty with the process and Chris was able to accommodate them all.

When Ed looks at Dime, he sees his own firm as well as many other small businesses who together make up the fabric of a community. And giving back to the community is very important to Ed, his family and his employees. Ed is currently a professor and serves as the Accounting Coordinator at Three Rivers Community College and is proud to point out that every employee at his firm has attended or graduated from TRCC.

And in sharing his love for teaching, Ed pointed out that his experience with Dime taught him a lesson he would like to impart: "We've all heard of 'bankers' hours,'" said Ed. "Well..., they don't exist at Dime."

L-R: Edwin R. Muenzner: CPA, Brian McNamara: Senior Vice President, Chief Lending Officer, Chris Gauthier: Vice President, Senior Commercial Lender

"We've all heard of 'bankers' hours." Well..., they don't exist at Dime."



## CONNECTING TOGETHER AS A GREAT TEAM



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** (Top Row, L-R) Nicholas Caplanson, President & Chief Executive Officer, Dime Bank; Linda L. Mariani, Attorney, Senior Partner, Mariani Reck Lane, LLC; Lee-Ann Gomes, Human Services Director, Norwich Human Services; Mark E. Tramontozzi, M.D., General and Vascular Surgeon, The William W. Backus Hospital; (Bottom Row L-R) Paul C. Maxfield, Comptroller, Mike's Famous Harley-Davidson; Peter Wm. Maneri Jr., Peter Wm. Maneri Jr., CPA, LLC; Steven L. Bokoff, Managing Partner, Goldblatt Bokoff, LLC; Bonnie Stewart, Executive Director, CT Society of CPAs

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Mr. Stephen M. Greene Mr. William J. Griffin IV Ms. Sarah E. Harris Mr. Jeff Hartmann Atty. Harry B. Heller Ms. Sharon H. Hewes Mr. DeVol Joyner Dr. Tarik Kardestuncer Mr. Bruce A. Kirchner Atty. Thomas J. Liquori, Jr. Mr. Joseph M. Mastronunzio Ms. Maria C. Miranda Ms. Deborah A. Monahan Atty. William A. Nardone Mr. Mark H. Powers Mr. Robert P. Reed Mr. Felix J. Reves Mr. Andrew R. Schilke

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\* Retired Director

2020 DIME BANK 11

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Julie Vance, Credit Manager

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Charles Maynard, Branch Manager III

Lorie Mocek, Branch Manager II Katherine Morano, Residential Loan Originator Kevin Owren Residential Loan Originator Cynthia Palmer, Commercial Lender/Portfolio Manager Linda Roberts, Trust Administration Officer Michelle Sawyer, Area Manager Heather Smith, Accounting Manager Deirdre Sullivan, Executive Admin & Project Manager Catherine Tiffany, Branch Manager II

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Darlene Serra, Benefits & Payroll Manager

Kara Spinnato, Branch Manager III

Lauren Sposato, Associate Director of Marketing Karen Talbot, Compliance/BSA Officer Erin Tirrell, Branch Manager II

#### SENIOR TEAM

(L-R) Nicholas Caplanson, Brian McNamara, Cheryl Calderado, Crystal Sides

(L-R) David Stanland, Johnna Taylor, Nicholas Statoulas, Thomas McAvoy, Jr.



#### With Appreciation We want to recognize and thank Roland J. Harris for

We want to recognize and thank Roland J. Harris for his twenty-five years of service to Dime Bank and our community. A successful commercial real estate broker, Roland first joined Dime as a Corporator in 1995 before being elected to our Board of Directors in 2000. His leadership and business savvy was instrumental to the success Dime enjoyed during his twenty-year Board tenure. Thanks Roland and best wishes!

Christina Abbotts Phyllis Alexander Caitlin Barker Jacquelyn Baudro Deliela Bettencourt Sandra Blanchard Joyce Borey Sharon Brouillard Andrea Bundy Laura Burdick Sheilah Calder Ovidio Chaparro Stacey Chauvin Cheryl Chmielewski Elizabeth Churchill Erin Concannon Christopher Corum-Giles Gina Cote Michelle Crandall Samantha Dauphinais Nicole Davis Luanne Deer Rebecca Dewaine Michael Dewald Deborah Dooley Joseph Duddy Larysa Dunton

#### **TEAM MEMBERS**

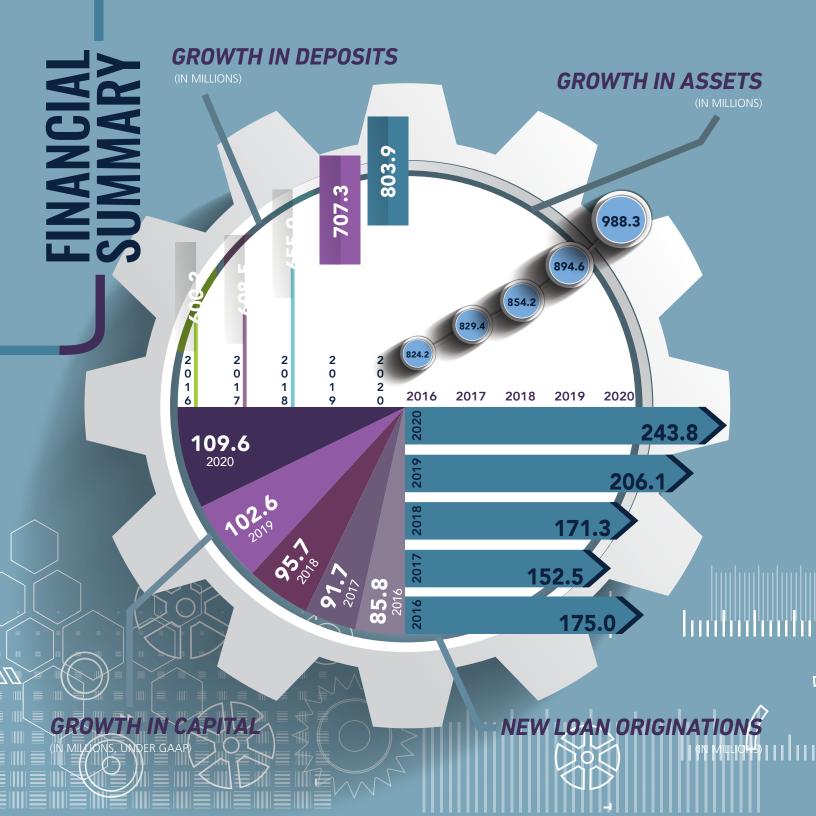
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2020 DIME BANK

13 ANNUAL REPORT



## **OUR LOCATIONS**

**COLCHESTER** 139 South Main Street Colchester, CT 06415

**EAST LYME** 18 Chesterfield Road East Lyme, CT 06333

**GLASTONBURY** 1009 Hebron Avenue Glastonbury, CT 06033

**LEDYARD** 744 Colonel Ledyard Highway Ledyard Center, CT 06339

MANCHESTER 299 West Middle Turnpike Manchester, CT 06040

**MONTVILLE** 563 Norwich - New London Turnpike Uncasville, CT 06382

**NEW LONDON** (Shaw's Cove) 668 Bank Street New London, CT 06320 **NORWICH** (Corporate) 290 Salem Turnpike Norwich, CT 06360 NCHES

Dime Bank

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NORWICH (Downtown) 33 Broadway Norwich, CT 06360

**NORWICH** (Norwichtown) 115 West Town Street Norwich, CT 06360

**STONINGTON BOROUGH** 4 Cannon Square Stonington, CT 06378

**TAFTVILLE** 630 Norwich Avenue Taftville, CT 06380

WESTERLY 131 Franklin Street Westerly, RI 02891



**BACKUS HOSPITAL** Emergency Department 326 Washington Street Norwich, CT 06360

FIDDLEHEADS FOOD CO-OP 13 Broad Street New London, CT 06320

**MYSTIC AQUARIUM** 55 Coogan Boulevard Mystic, CT 06355

#### NORWICH FREE ACADEMY

Atrium Building 305 Broadway Norwich, CT 06360

860.859.4300 & 401.596.4744 ALSO BANK WITH DIME ONLINE & THE DIME BANK MOBILE APP





