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Date: March 31, 2016

Community First Fund Growing in Lehigh Valley Adds New Team Member & Opens Lehigh Valley Office

- **New Team Member:** Community First Fund announces the appointment of **Hope Pearson, as VP, Community Lending** for the Lehigh Valley. She will be managing all client relationships in the Lehigh Valley from the organization's new Allentown office.
- **About Pearson:** Pearson, a resident of Germansville, has over 25 years of financial services experience. Prior to joining Community First Fund, she served as Chief Operations Officer for New Tripoli Bank. She also previously held several leadership positions at Sovereign Bank/Santander US.

Pearson serves on the board of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Women's Council, is a graduate of Leadership Lehigh Valley, and is a recipient of the 2015 Lehigh Valley Business Journal Women of Influence Award.

- **Pearson Quote:** "As a lifelong resident of the Lehigh Valley", Pearson states, "I look forward to focusing my attention on serving the needs of this community's business owners and developers and offering them a wide variety of financing products and services."
- **New office opening on 4/4/16**
 - Community First Fund committed to growth in Lehigh Valley
 - Office is located at 612 W. Hamilton Street, Suite 202F, Allentown, PA 18101
 - Newly renovated Trifecta Building which previously housed Schoen's Furniture
- **About Community First Fund**
 - Regional, nonprofit community lender (CDFI) operates in fifteen counties throughout central and eastern PA, including Berks & Lehigh Valley
 - Has 5 offices in Lancaster, Reading, Allentown, York and Harrisburg
 - Has made more than **1400 loans totaling \$95 million** to businesses, housing developers, nonprofit organizations and commercial real estate projects in central and eastern Pennsylvania
 - Offers a variety of programs/loan products including small micro loans, medium-sized business loans ranging from \$50,000 to \$750,000, and commercial real estate loans up to \$2 million.
 - Over the past 3 years, Community First Fund has received over **\$45 million** in New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) from the U.S. Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund. Established by Congress in 2000 to spur new or increased investments into operating businesses and real estate projects located in low-income communities, the NMTC Program attracts investment capital to low-income communities by permitting individual and corporate investors to receive a tax credit against their Federal income tax return in exchange for making equity investments in Community Development Entities like Community First Fund.

- **Sample of Community First Fund clients in Lehigh Valley**

- Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts - \$3 million/portion of \$10+ mill deal (Bethlehem)
- Greenleaf Productions (media/film production) - \$400,000 (Easton)
- Consolidated Storage Companies – worked with LHEDC - \$230,000 (Tatamy)
- Baby Harry Coffee Company - \$40,000 (Bangor)
- Custom Diesel Service, LLC - \$200,000 (Allentown)