

## SPONSOR

*Spotlight*



Lynchburg enjoys a rich heritage that reaches back more than 250 years. Today, the downtown area is a testament to a city bursting with new energy as Lynchburg experiences a rebirth through renovation. It is the same vision that typifies Bank of the James.

In less than 20 years of existence, Bank of the James has already established a legacy that is making a mark in its hometown. Vice President and Community Relations Director Vickie Spencer said the company's success is due to three attributes. "First we have a talented group of bankers who truly care about the bank and their customers," Spencer said. "Secondly, the bank is locally-owned and managed, which enables us to be active in the communities we serve." The third attribute is customer service. "It is a level of service that is given to each customer, every time, every day."

Bank of the James opened its home office in Lynchburg in July

1999 with 12 employees and 10 directors. Today, the bank has more than 140 employees, a 13 member Board of Directors, and over 40 business and community leaders who comprise its regional advisory boards. The bank serves the Region 2000 community, as well as Appomattox, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg and Roanoke. During the past two decades, the bank has expanded to 13 full service locations, three limited service locations, two loan production offices, and an investment/insurance division.

Even with its rapid growth, Spencer said Bank of the James has not forgotten that its customers are the bank's reason for existence. "It's about taking ownership, following up and delivering to our customers what we have promised them, each and every day," she said. Spencer also said the same perspective relates to its investors. "Our mission is to provide our shareholders long-term growth and an attractive return on their investment with our bank."

Spencer said the bank's employees are another distinguishing characteristic. "They are proud to work for our organization, and take great pride in their jobs and enjoy working with each other," she said. "We offer a rewarding work experience, training, and numerous growth opportunities to all of our employees."

Bank of the James also recognizes the importance in giving back to the communities it serves. "We believe our strong support of civic and charitable activities makes a difference," said Spencer. "The bank sets aside a dedicated budget each year for donations and sponsorships." In 2017, the company contributed to over 200 non-profits and organizations, including those related to health and human services, entities that provide educational opportunities, and organizations that add a cultural and artistic layer to their communities.

The Lynchburg Symphony Orchestra is one of the arts organizations that has benefited from the bank's generous financial support for several years. "Our community is proud to have our own symphony," said Spencer. In addition to attendees enjoying concerts, Spencer also noted that the LSO is an attractive feature for businesses recruiting future employees to live here.

"We give to the LSO because we want to keep the music going."