

BOCB Awards Community Service: Crisis Management Category

First State Bank's March 2022 Tornado Response

Brief Program Summary:

When we saw the community of Jacksboro facing devastation from tornadoes, our First State Bank Decatur branch location was quick to respond to the needs of our friends, extending help to a neighboring county. With the support of our community and our preparation in crisis management, we collaborated on what we could do to help. Homes were destroyed. Lives were disrupted. So, we immediately worked to gather supplies, provide food for over 400 people and collect donations totaling nearly \$9,500 to help our neighbors. The trust in our local community and our commitment to service are what keeps the heart of First State Bank beating proudly.

Documentation of Program:

On March 21, 2022, multiple tornadoes and severe storms wreaked havoc across North Texas, leaving catastrophe in their wake. For the people of Jack, Grayson and Montague counties, their lives had been completely upended with at least 100 homes destroyed and many others damaged extensively. Luckily, the communities where First State Bank resides were comparably unscathed, but we saw our neighbors in need and immediately stepped in to gather aid and assist.

Over the course of two days, we collected donations from individuals and businesses within our community. Our mission to support the community as our home and aid the people of Jacksboro was echoed by our local communities, who answered our call with a flood of supplies and financial donations. With our Decatur branch leading the efforts, they received immense support from other local businesses including James Wood Motors. It was heartening to see how eager our community was to help others, and our collaboration provided huge relief for the people of Jacksboro and other communities across North Texas.

After three days, we had collected \$8,615, made possible by the ceaseless compassion from our community and local businesses. With these donations, bought much-needed supplies to be distributed at community centers in Jacksboro, including baby formula and personal essentials. We also set up a charitable cookout with hot dogs, sausages and other snacks for those in need, feeding over 400 people. We worked with the principal at Jacksboro Elementary to distribute the extra food and we still had more leftover to donate to the local fire department.

Amid the devastation, the charity and willingness to help of local communities shone like a beacon. While we were acquiring supplies and donations at local stores, the community was keen to lend a hand, even helping First State Bank load supplies. The trust between First State Bank and our community is what makes us really stand out and allows us to make a real impact in the lives of others. The kindness of strangers is what keeps hope alive, especially in the hardest times.

Jacksboro is in a neighboring county to our Decatur branch location, but the impact of the tornadoes rippled across the state, and to our employees and their loved ones. Our willingness to help others isn't restricted to our county borders and instead pours out to those who need us.

There was a wrong to be righted, and we rose to the occasion. Our mission is to treat the community as our home, customers as our neighbors and employees as our family. Hardships and disasters are often inevitable, but these experiences make us stronger and more prepared for adversity. We thrive on the empathy that is perfectly reflected by the community we serve. There was nothing to gain, only care to give.

BOCB Awards Bank Culture: Training and Development Programs Category

First State Bank's Next Level Leadership Program

Brief Program Summary:

At First State Bank, our culture is powered by one simple question: How can we help our employees succeed? A positive work culture is a group effort, made possible by every individual working in harmony, building an environment that encourages growth and celebrates success. First State Bank has been fully committed to workplace authenticity and the pursuit of progress since 1905, maintained by the unity felt across the enterprise. We believe great leadership makes great culture, and with our Next Level Leadership program, employees of all levels can come together and learn from one another, improving their skills and overcoming challenges. Because at First State Bank, our employees are our family, and families support each other through thick and thin.

Documentation of Program:

At First State Bank, our mission is to treat the community as our home, customers as our neighbors and employees as our family. Our culture is founded on this mission. A positive work culture is a necessity that grows alongside the dedicated individuals working together to make greatness happen. That's why in 2021 we established our Next Level Leadership (NLL) training program, which helps our employees thrive in their personal and professional lives. This program gives seasoned and upcoming leaders the opportunity to learn on the same level and understand one another's perspectives. By fostering trust and camaraderie through our culture, our teams form unbreakable bonds that withstand challenge and time.

The Next Level Leadership program was born from the need for change. With so many young and eager talents joining the workforce, our leadership team discussed how to keep up with the changing times. We wanted our traditional work culture to evolve and ensure a positive environment for everyone. We accomplished this by working with Evolve Coaching Group, an organization dedicated to creating a custom training program for businesses seeking improvement. We made a coaching curriculum curated to the needs and goals of First State Bank. That's how NLL came to be which allowed us to break from the outdated patterns in the financial banking industry and embrace positive change in our work culture.

Our goal was to coach our younger employees before they became leaders, but we also realized the current managers and leaders needed to know how to approach working with this new generation with effective communication. It was clear to see that current leaders were hungry for this development and wanted to grow alongside their younger coworkers as a team. With entry-

level and long-term employees learning together on the same level, our familial and supportive culture can only grow stronger. First State Bank has a different mentality than other banks as we embrace change fearlessly for the betterment of our employees and our culture.

At First State Bank, empowerment is infectious. Our emerging leaders are supported by their managers to achieve greatness, and in turn, the eagerness of our new talent inspires our tenured leaders to continue to improve themselves. The NLL training teaches a coaching style to leadership in which the ideas from younger employees are welcomed and encouraged by their leaders. Here, the unbreakable trust between a leader and their team makes anything possible. Our leaders are learning how to manage sideways and manage up, guiding their teams supportively and maintaining harmony among other managers. A coaching leader maximizes their abilities to spread their wisdom with their team, cultivating growth and camaraderie across the workplace.

Our NLL program is proof of what embracing change can accomplish. While banking has tended to be a more reserved industry, First State Bank remains forward thinking and understanding of the changes in the market. If we want to remain competitive in the market and attract top talent, this type of training can rocket our organization to the top. Our future only goes as far as our willingness to embrace change, and we're excited to see where our Next Level Leadership will take us.