



**BANKING DEMANDS LEADERSHIP.
GSB BUILDS LEADERS.**



GSB SESSION KICKS OFF JULY 30

The 77th Session of the Graduate School of Banking will kick off on Sunday, July 30 – and our staff and faculty are excited to welcome bankers from across the country – and around the world – to beautiful Madison!

We also look forward to having some special guests with us; the GSB Banker Advisory Board and Education Directors from many of our sponsoring states will visit the second week of session to network with students, attend classes and provide valuable feedback on program curriculum. We sincerely appreciate their time and commitment – as well as the support of GSB Trustees who'll attend commencement and state association staff who will be onsite for state club networking events.

Finally, we offer our thanks to the following organizations for their sponsorship of the GSB Distinguished Speaker Series:

- Strategic Resource Management, Memphis, TN
- BankTalentHQ, Springfield, IL
- Financial Managers Society, Chicago, IL
- University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Isenberg School of Management, Amherst, MA
- University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
- Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines, Des Moines, IA
- Wipfli LLP, Minneapolis, MN



**ENROLLMENT FOR THE 2024
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BANKING
WILL OPEN IN SEPTEMBER!**

GSB ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: ROBIN CHRISTIAN



Robin Christian
*Senior Vice President,
Retail Operations,
Premier Community
Bank, Marion,
Wisconsin*

From the first time Robin Christian stood behind the counter as a part-time teller in college, she immediately saw her future, full of opportunities for advancement and career growth. As senior vice president, retail operations, Premier Community Bank, Marion, Wisconsin, Christian is on a mission to mentor and bring as many individuals, particularly women, as she can into the industry that she loves and a career that she has found rewarding for the last 25 years.

"I would like to be able to keep people in the banking industry, educating and encouraging younger people and minorities to join our industry," she says. "There are so many different career options and professional possibilities in banking. Banking

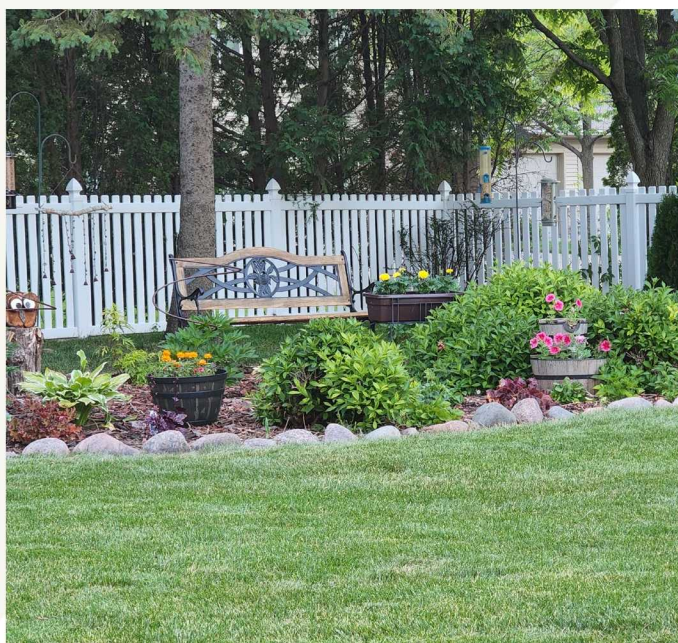
is not boring; there is never a dull moment!" She adds, "Sometimes it's not sexy at all, and nobody really thinks about it as a career. But it can absolutely be a phenomenal career."

Christian says the plentiful opportunities in banking are what have made it an ideal career. "Opportunities for advancement were available for me to grow, and I was constantly learning new skills which kept me engaged," she adds. "If you are with the right organization, there is never an end to your opportunities to learn and grow."

Christian observes that the draw to her for banking is making a difference in the lives of people. She states that early in her career she enjoyed working with customers and their needs for loans, accounts, or credit guidance, but as she has progressed over the years in her leadership roles, she is now driven by assisting and watching the growth of employees in the organization. "When employees want to learn more and take on responsibility, knowing they are in a safe environment to grow, means that we are doing things the right way," she says. "Helping others find success and courage is what makes me feel like I am contributing to the organization and industry."

"I enjoy that banking is connected to everyday life for people while also being the industry that keeps America going," she says. "I enjoy that even after 25+ years in the industry, I still learn something new on a regular basis."

It was this love of learning that led the 2009 graduate to GSB. At a previous community bank, the strategic plan was for her to become the EVP with a track for president. When the then-president asked



her if she'd like to attend GSB, she grabbed the opportunity because she wanted to learn more. That bank was later purchased, temporarily stalling her growth—but only temporarily.

Christian attributes GSB with giving her, not only the opportunity to grow into a senior management role at Premier in 2013, but also connecting with bankers from all over the world, gaining a comprehensive education about different areas of banking and an understanding of her colleagues' roles in running the bank. "The bank is not successful because of one person or department," she notes. "It takes all departments to make a successful operation."

"GSB Spotlight: Robin Christian" continued on page 4 ...

ENROLL NOW FOR FALL SCHOOLS – LIMITED SPACE REMAINS



SALES AND MARKETING SCHOOL

September 25-29, 2023

Fluno Center for Executive Education,
Madison, WI

ENROLLMENT DEADLINE: AUGUST 25

Today's bank customer is more knowledgeable, has more tools at their disposal, and has higher expectations than ever before. That's why it's so important for bank marketing and sales teams to collaborate effectively to drive long term growth and profitability. The GSB Sales and Marketing School is the only school of its kind in our industry – designed from the ground up to help bank marketers and business development professionals succeed. Combining the business of banking with leading edge marketing content, this hands-on school explores a wide variety of important concepts in sales planning, coaching, goal setting, data management, branding, content marketing and more. Register now!



BANK TECHNOLOGY SECURITY SCHOOL

October 16-20, 2023

Fluno Center for Executive Education,
Madison, WI

ENROLLMENT DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 15

As criminal hackers grow more sophisticated, it's critical that banks have proactive IT security in place to stop attacks and protect vital bank and customer data. Don't miss this innovative school that's designed by, and especially for, information security officers in the financial industry. This state-of-the-art program will broaden your understanding of the business of banking including key drivers of bank profitability, along with an in depth, interactive and hands-on study of the latest IT security techniques and strategies.

WAITLIST & PRIORITY 2024 ENROLLMENT NOW AVAILABLE FOR SOLD-OUT FINANCIAL MANAGERS SCHOOL

The 2023 session of the Financial Managers School, the immensely popular school GSB offers in partnership with the Financial Managers Society, is set for September 18-22, 2023, and has a lengthy waitlist. Those who apply by August 18 will receive priority enrollment for the 2024 program – which we expect will also sell out well early. Take advantage of this terrific opportunity to secure your place in the next available session of this school.

PREVIEW OF 2024 SPRING PROGRAMS!



Mark your calendars now for exciting schools coming up next spring. Enrollment will open in September.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SCHOOL April 15-19, 2024

Fluno Center for Executive Education
Madison, WI

BANK TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL April 22-26, 2024

Fluno Center for Executive Education
Madison, WI

DIGITAL BANKING SCHOOL

Offered Virtually with Per-Bank Fees!
Spring 2024 Dates TBA

...continued from page 3, "GSB Spotlight: Robin Christian"

Christian says her GSB education gave her an understanding of a larger picture of her organization and the banking industry. "There were so many smart people at the school with different responsibilities at their organizations that I began to understand the meaning of teamwork and the coordination it takes to be successful," she says. She adds that the program led to the realization that though her technical skills would contribute to the organization, it was her ability to work with others and encourage others that would make Premier successful.

Christian adds that though her community bank was purchased in 2008 and her career trajectory there was hindered, it was her GSB education that allowed her to know how to look for other great community banks as options for employment and be able to make a difference in those organizations quickly.

Another area Christian is making an impact is by bringing more women into banking.

"The industry is fascinating in how it operates, how banks can make a difference in communities and how much of our government is focused on our financial industry—and not just in regulations," she says. "I also want to make a difference to other female bankers as a role model, by encouraging them to learn more and to know that that they can be a female, a mother, a wife and a leader within their organizations."

Christian is committed to shaping the careers of women in banking and formally mentors a new female in human resources at Premier. "She's not a banker, but she's an integral part of the process in our organization," she says. "I can help her to understand the banking roles."

Christian adds that Premier does have a formal leadership program which provides opportunities for all its employees to get involved in leadership through education and training. In particular, she mentions the Positive Intelligence coaching program, which she says plays off emotional intelligence but is more about helping individuals to understand themselves, their reactions in certain situations and how to handle these reactions. She encourages all her branch managers, who happen to be majority women, to participate in the program. "This coaching is meant to address that annoying voice in their head that tells them they can't do something."

After completing two master's degrees, an MBA and MS-LOD, Christian enjoys spending time outdoors and has a continued passion for learning. She says it's not uncommon for her to take a tech school course on sewing, reiki, gardening, mushroom growing or crypto currency. Additionally, she and her husband recently bought a home in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, that boasts many unique plants and a beautiful garden. This spurred her with new herbal recipes, making her own vanilla extracts and learning to grow medicinal herbs.

"I wanted to learn more about these plants so I could care for them and realized quickly that they all had medicinal purposes," she says. "A new interest was born. It is truly amazing what is around us that is meant to help us."

She also enjoys family time with her husband of 25 years, adult children Dennis, 22, Cora, 18, and newest addition to the family, Cora's infant son, Malachi. A new grandmother for the first time, Christian especially treasures time with him and this time in her life. ■