



NEWS RELEASE

Associated Bank Named Top SBA Lender in Wisconsin for the Fifth Year in a Row

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Small Businesses Create Jobs and Help Drive Economic Growth

MILWAUKEE, Wis.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Associated Bank was named the No. 1 Small Business Administration (SBA) lender in Wisconsin for fiscal year 2009, according to a recent SBA report. Associated surpassed all other banks in number of loans originated with more than three times that of the second-highest lender.

From Oct. 1, 2008 to Sept. 30, 2009, Associated Bank made 317 SBA 7(a) loans for a total value of more than \$25 million. This is the fifth year in a row that Associated Bank has received the top lender honor, and the 10th time in 12 years.

"We commend Associated Bank's continued support to small business lending," says SBA Wisconsin District Director Eric Ness. "This type of commitment helps to ensure that Wisconsin firms are receiving the much needed assistance and capital to start and expand their businesses. This activity is fundamental to Wisconsin and our nation's economic growth."

Nationally, Associated Bank moved to number 13 in the nation for SBA lending in fiscal 2009, up from number 23 in fiscal 2008. In fiscal 2009, more than 160 new jobs were created and approximately 2,600 existing jobs were retained as a result of Associated Bank SBA loans in the states where it conducts business.

"While we are incredibly pleased with our new rankings, it's clear that the impact of these lending efforts is about

much more than winning a title," said Senior Vice President of Business Banking Kerry Barlow. "It is about how many businesses we touched throughout Wisconsin and in our communities."

Associated Bank is part of Associated Banc-Corp (NASDAQ: ASBC), a diversified bank holding company with total assets of \$23 billion headquartered in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Associated has approximately 300 banking offices serving an estimated 160 communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois. Associated offers a full range of traditional banking services and a variety of other financial products and services. More information about Associated Banc-Corp is available at www.AssociatedBank.com.

Source: Associated Banc-Corp

Contact: Associated Banc-Corp Janet L. Ford, 414-278-1890 Senior Vice President Public Relations Director Cell: 414-704-1211 janet.ford@associatedbank.com