



NEWS RELEASE

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LincolnWay East Student Wins State-Wide Scholarship Competition ***Town Center Bank sponsors winner for fourth year in a row***

Frankfort & New Lenox, IL - For the fourth consecutive year, Shirley Pirko, Vice President of Town Center Bank, has had the honor of presenting not just the Bank's local scholarships to Lincoln-Way students, but a state wide scholarship from the Community Bankers Association of Illinois (CBAI) Foundation for Community Banking.

"Our community's investment in our schools makes all the difference. Our students write essays that are well thought out, interesting and structurally sound, positioning them to win both Town Center Bank's scholarship and the state CBAI scholarship dollars," said Pirko.

Senior Brett Jennrich from Lincoln-Way East submitted a three-paragraph essay in January and won one of Town Center Bank's 2018 Annual Scholarships of \$500. The Bank then sponsored the submission of Jennrich's essay to the CBAI contest.

"Brett was selected by CBAI as a second place winner for this region," says Pirko, "and wins an additional one-time \$500 to be used for higher education. We are so pleased we have a state-wide winner again."

Jennrich's essay detailed his personal experiences with community banking. "I owe my existence to a community bank," he said. "My parents met each other while working at one." His essay talked about growing up watching his parents work at the bank, and how the smell of fresh baked cookies brings memories of his childhood, waiting for his mom to finish transactions. Jennrich also discussed the important role that community banks play in developing and growing local businesses, reinvesting directly into the neighborhood they serve. He also explained how community banks are vital supporters of non-profits, schools and youth organizations, performing valuable outreach through local events; becoming pillars of strong communities.

The CBAI Annual Scholarship Program is in its 32nd year, offering \$21,000 to 24 high-school seniors via an essay-writing contest. This year, 83 CBAI member banks representing 220 students statewide participated in the contest. Town Center Bank has been presenting its own scholarships of \$500 each to a student from each Lincoln-Way school since 2014.

Senior Jessica Bowers was the Town Center Bank's 2018 Annual Scholarship winner from Lincoln-Way Central. Her essay discussed the lasting impact community banking

made on her life, from bringing together the neighborhood at family fun events, to opening her own account when she was hired to her very first job. She also lauded community banking in helping her mother start a business, supported by the highest quality products, personal service in setting up accounts, and strong and beneficial networking relationships. Bowers explained how community banks have kept their commitments to local charitable organizations while fully embracing evolving banking technology, making financial management ever easier for customers.

The 2019 Town Center Annual Bank Scholarship Contest and CBAI Annual Scholarship Program open in January. “Any graduating senior at each of the three Lincoln-Way schools are eligible for our contest,” said Pirko. “We award a \$500 scholarship to the winning essay from each school, and the top essay is submitted to CBAI’s program. Submissions are accepted throughout the month of January.

For more information, students can contact their school’s counseling offices or visit Town Center Bank’s website, www.towncenterbank.com or Facebook page, www.facebook.com/towncenterbank, in early January.

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About CBAI: Founded in 1974, CBAI is a professional trade association headquartered in Springfield, and represents approximately 330 Illinois community-oriented banks and thrifts.

About the CBAI Foundation for Community Banking: The Foundation was established by CBAI to professionally serve and support member financial institutions through every available channel, and to promote the community-banking philosophy.