



***Engagement.  
Education.  
Empowerment.***

***That's MERRIMACK Style.***



**MERRIMACK**  
COUNTY SAVINGS BANK

# To Our Customers, Community, and Employees

Throughout 2024 and beyond, The Merrimack remains a steadfast pillar in the communities we serve. We've been here for 158 years, and we navigate through steady and uncertain times while holding true to our values of stewardship, respect, and commitment to the people we work for every day.

In 2024, The Merrimack focused heavily on growth and support for our community. We celebrated the opening of our 9th branch in Henniker, at 262 Maple Street, expanding into the western region of New Hampshire. In this welcoming new community, we got right to work, supporting local businesses, sponsoring non-profit initiatives, and hosting a Chamber event. We've enjoyed getting to know our new neighbors and can't wait to continue to grow our relationships.

At The Merrimack, we are proud to be an institution you can count on. Much more than a bank, we thrive when you thrive. And we've been working hard to get out into the community and give you the tools to succeed. From Scam Awareness training to First-Time Homebuyer seminars, from donating hundreds of thousands of dollars to non-profit organizations to creating a banking experience that serves your needs, The Merrimack has you in mind.

For us, it's about the people and the communities we call home.  
*That's **MERRIMACK** Style.*



# The Merrimack Believes Education is *Empowerment*

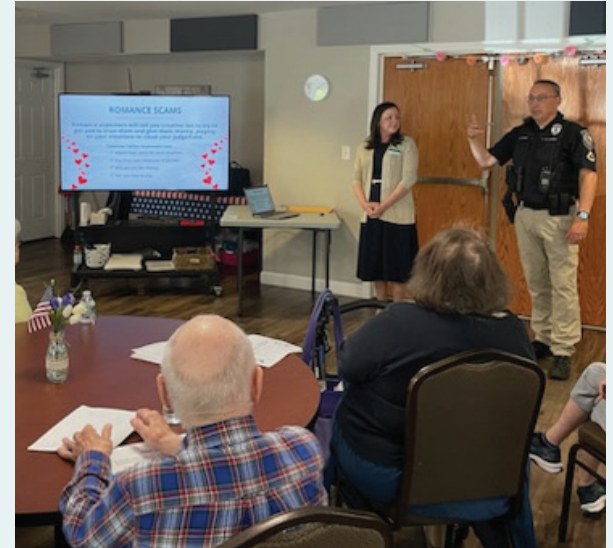
With sophisticated fraud scams on the rise, a scarce housing market, and record high costs of living, The Merrimack sought ways to help our communities manage in 2024. After receiving positive feedback about our educational videos and online posts, our next step was a more hands-on approach, delivering information directly to our customers.

Mindful of our most vulnerable populations, our frontline teams delivered Scam Awareness training and Financial Education in public and private locations, teaching our communities how to spot scams and protect their assets from criminals. One Scam Awareness presentation given at the Concord Public Library was recorded and posted on YouTube by ConcordTV to help spread the word.

Our branches also welcomed new and potential homebuyers to our free First Time Homebuyer and Construction seminars, where our Mortgage Lenders answered our community's most pressing questions. Whether they were interested in purchasing an existing home or building one on purchased land, we provided information, insight, and reassurance to attendees interested in what can be a daunting process.

At The Merrimack, we believe that education is key to protecting our customers and helping them achieve financial success. By empowering them with information about financial literacy, fraud, and residential loans, we are building a stronger, more confident community.

*That's* **MERRIMACK Style.**



# Commercial Lending

New customer acquisition, specifically small businesses, was the focus of our efforts in 2024. We continued our close relationship with the Small Business Administration (SBA), which assisted in originating loans to business owners who have the ability to make loan payments, but might otherwise lack certain credit and/or collateral conditions set forth by the bank's lending policies. In Q2, we launched our Rapid Business Loan, an online business lending product for smaller-sized loans ranging from \$10,000 - \$100,000. Using the Rapid Business Loan product, we originated 41 loans over the course of the year.

2024 saw the retirement of seasoned lender Mike Vlahos from our Concord office and the addition of Isaac Davis and Scott Nichols. Isaac is an experienced lender who has stepped into Mike Vlahos' role. Scott has small-business lending experience, and bringing him on board allows all of our lenders to spend more time in the community working on business development and strengthening customer relationships.

We successfully implemented nCino, a new, state-of-the-art Loan Operating System (LOS). The system provides a faster and more seamless process for originating and closing new loans and monitoring asset quality and compliance-related tasks. While new loan volume in 2024 was below our historical average due to elevated interest rates and economic uncertainty, the majority of our loan portfolio remains in good health, as borrowers maintained solid deposits and our delinquency rate remained favorable. We have been fortunate to have a concentration of seasoned, well-known businesses that make up a significant portion of our loan portfolio.



# Retail Banking

In September 2024, we joined the Henniker community. This created an opportunity to expand our footprint within New Hampshire's western region; we are now proud to have branches in Henniker, Contoocook, and Bow.

The Merrimack hosted 40 presentations in 2024 throughout all the communities we serve, with a focus on financial literacy and fraud awareness. As more presentations are scheduled for 2025, we look forward to enriching these educational offerings by including guest speakers and partnerships.

The year ended with the successful launch of online business account opening and integrated card controls. Going into 2025, we look forward to offering consumers a certified Bank On checking account, an accessible account that helps build financial stability with no overdraft or nonsufficient funds fees.

# Consumer and Indirect Lending

Our goal for 2024 was to nurture our established relationships and moderately pace indirect loan volume. Higher interest rates allowed us to control and suppress loan volume, as planned. To maintain the quality of our indirect loan portfolio, we increased our minimum credit score requirement from 660 to 680.

We also focused on further refining the use of our new loan origination software, MeridianLink. Our lenders became proficient with the software, and we maximized efficiencies by creating procedures for MeridianLink for even greater competency. Additionally, we've successfully launched electronic signatures and mobile applications for our direct consumer loans. This has greatly improved both our service to retail and the overall customer experience.

Going into 2025, our major initiative will be shifting administration of Numerated, our small business loan program, from the commercial departments across our affiliates to the Consumer Department at the holding company level. Centralization to our Consumer Department will improve efficiency, standardize the process, and ultimately increase the volume of these loans. And it will allow commercial lenders to concentrate on acquiring and servicing larger relationships within our communities.



## Mortgage Lending

Although rates remained stable for most of 2024, high home prices, high interest rates, and low inventory made buying a home in New Hampshire a challenge. That's why we partnered with Habitat for Humanity for a second time, and closed on a home loan late in the year. We have another mortgage with Habitat for Humanity planned in 2025.

In 2024 we worked to expand our portfolio of mortgage lending products, so we can help more customers become homeowners. The Merrimack partnered with Flagstar Bank and Newfi to offer more Government, Jumbo, and Self-Employed Borrower loan options. And in May, our team completed training for FHA, VA and USDA lending.

At The Merrimack, we believe knowledge is empowering. To help potential homebuyers in all the communities we serve, we provided free educational homebuyer presentations, including Construction Loan seminars, a New Hampshire Housing seminar, and several First-Time Homebuyer seminars.

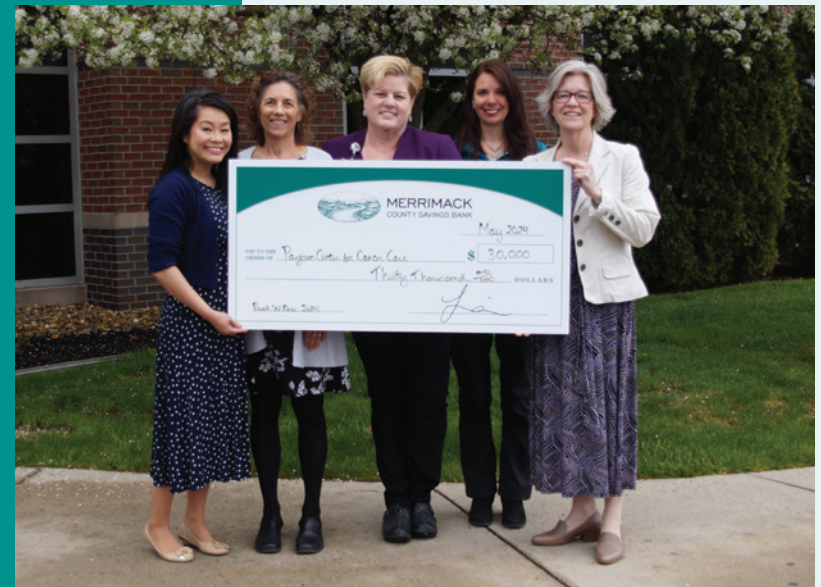
Though interest rates are at their lowest in two years and there is some optimism from borrowers, low inventory and high prices still make finding affordable housing a challenge. The Merrimack will continue to find ways to help members of our communities find the homes that are right for them.

# Giving Back to Our Communities

The Merrimack has enjoyed a long tradition of corporate citizenship. We were proud to champion our community with \$403,221.51 in donations and sponsorship support in 2024. Our employees also gave thousands of hours of their time to volunteer efforts.

We also purchased \$200,000 in tax credits through the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) from the following organizations:

- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Nashua
- Coalition to End Homelessness
- Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire
- Kimball Jenkins
- New Hampshire Community Loan Fund
- Overcomers Refugee Services
- White Birch Community Center



# Grant Funding

Established in 1997, the Merrimack County Savings Bank Foundation remains committed to providing financial support to organizations that enrich and improve the quality of life for residents in our service areas. In 2024, The Merrimack awarded \$57,170 to the following 23 local non-profits:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Central New Hampshire - \$1,500
  - Circle Program - \$2,500
  - Concord Hospital Trust - \$2,200
  - Connor's Climb Foundation - \$2,000
  - Daniel Webster Council, Boy Scouts of America - \$1,500
  - Family Promise of Greater Concord - \$1,500
  - Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire - \$2,000
  - Families in Transition - \$2,000
  - Friends of New Hampshire Drug Courts – \$5,000
  - Friends of Tucker Free Library - \$2,500
  - Friends of Concord Crew - \$2,250
  - Friends Program - \$2,000
  - The Front Door Agency - \$3,000
  - Future in Sight - \$2,500
  - Girls Inc. of New Hampshire - \$3,500
  - Granite YMCA of Concord - \$3,720
  - Marguerite's Place - \$1,500
  - Overcomers Refugee Services - \$2,500
  - The Pittsfield Youth Workshop - \$3,500
  - Riverbend Community Mental Health - \$2,500
  - SEE Science Center - \$1,500
  - Waypoint - \$4,000
  - YMCA of Greater Nashua - \$2,000
- 

# Staying Innovative

## with New Products and Services







## ONLINE BUSINESS ACCOUNT OPENING

Along with consumers, businesses can now open checking accounts online. The system integrates with online loan applications for a unified experience.



## INTEGRATED CARDHOLDER CONTROLS

Online tools for debit card management are now fully integrated into The Merrimack mobile app. Customers can now manage every aspect of their account with just one app.



## IMPROVED COMMERCIAL LOAN EXPERIENCE WITH nCINO

To further streamline workflows and ensure customers are informed and engaged throughout our loan process, we've fully embraced nCino. This robust loan processing technology improves the efficiency of our underwriting, approvals, loan document generation and bookings.

# 2024 Financial Highlights

Merrimack County Savings  
Bank Executive Summary  
December 31, 2024

## Balance Sheet (\$000's)

	December 2023	December 2024
Interest Bearing Deposits	18,260	14,798
Intercompany Fed Funds Sold	-	-
Investment Securities	123,302	125,434
Loans	1,164,642	1,149,926
Assets	1,367,559	1,352,829
Deposits	1,030,524	1,120,697
Repurchase Agreements	64,135	46,131
Intercompany Fed Funds Purchased	-	-
Borrowed Funds	150,158	61,332
Equity	113,531	115,328

## Balance Sheet Statistics (%):

	December 2023	December 2024
On-Balance Sheet Liquidity	4.78%	7.46%
Basic Surplus (30 Day)	19.19%	26.94%
Loan to Deposit	113.43%	103.94%
Loan to Asset	86.17%	85.19%
ALLL to Loans	0.98%	1.07%
Consumer Loans to Tier 1 Capital	176.15%	172.71%
Leverage Capital	9.28%	9.44%
Leverage Capital Excluding Sub Debt	8.94%	9.10%
Tier 1 Risk Based Capital	12.04%	12.63%
Tier 1 Risk Based Capital Excluding Sub Debt	11.60%	12.17%
Total Risk Based Capital	13.17%	13.88%
Total Risk Based Capital Excluding Sub Debt	12.73%	13.42%

### Income Statement (\$000's)

	December 2023	December 2024
Interest Income	56,178	61,879
Interest Expense	21,145	26,752
Net Interest Income	35,033	35,126
Provision for Credit Losses	641	4,232
Other Income	4,940	4,778
Other Expense	30,548	32,030
Pre-Tax Income	8,783	3,641
Provision for Taxes	1,811	534
Net Income	6,972	3,108

### Income Statement Statistics

	December 2023	December 2024
Yield on Earning Assets	4.29%	4.66%
Cost of Paying Liabilities	1.73%	2.17%
Net Spread	2.56%	2.49%
Net Interest Margin	2.68%	2.64%
Return on Average Assets	0.52%	0.23%
Operating Expense to Average Assets	2.28%	2.35%
Efficiency Ratio	76.42%	80.27%

# 2024 Directors and Corporators

## DIRECTORS

**Chair:** Jeffrey S. Kipperman, *Enfield*

**Vice Chair:** Christiana Thornton, *Pembroke*

Peter G. Bloomfield, *Hollis*

Christopher Brown, *Concord*

James P. Burnett, III, *Concord*

Sarah Mattson Dustin, *Contoocook*

Linda Lorden, *Concord*  
(President of The Merrimack)

Jessica Prieto, *Henniker*

Jay Stewart, *Portsmouth*

Gregg R. Tewksbury, *Keene*  
(President & CEO of NHMB)

## LOCAL NHMB CORPORATORS

Elyssa Alfieri, *Londonderry*

Jonathan Chorlian, *Concord*

James Corrigan, *Contoocook*

Michael Coughlin, *Canterbury* \*

John Cross, *Concord*

Glenn Currie, *Concord*

Kelli D'Amore, *Deerfield*

Jane Difley, *Webster*

Sabrina Dunlap, *Hopkinton*

William Dunlap, *Hopkinton*

Philip Emma, *Henniker*

Chris Emond, *Epsom*

David Gazaway, Jr., *Bow*

John Gilbert, *Greenland*

Michael Green, *Hopkinton*

Angie Lane, *Manchester*

Sylvia Larsen, *Concord*

Stephanie McLaughlin, *Manchester*

Pedro Nunex-Bautista, *Pelham*

Tara Reardon, *Concord*

Emily Ricard, *Concord*

Jonathan Ruggles, *Concord*

Elizabeth Salas Evans, *Weare*

Peggy Senter, *Dunbarton*

Bradford Smith, *Sullivan*

Sally Tanner, *Concord*

Daniel Weeks, *Nashua*

Jeffrey Zellers, *Concord*

Toutou Marsden, *Chichester*

Bill Gurney, *Nashua*

Mike Bourbeau, *Bow*

*\*We are sad to note that we lost Michael in October of 2024.*

# 2024 Bank Officers

## EXECUTIVE

Linda J. Lorden, President

Melissa Stevenson, Executive Assistant & Assistant Corporate Secretary

## COMMERCIAL LENDING

James Gallagher, SVP Senior Commercial Lending Officer

Joanne Connelly, SVP Commercial Lending Team Leader

Terrie McQuillen, SVP Credit & Administration

David Peterson, SVP Commercial Lending Team Leader

Margot Elise Anderson, VP Commercial Loan Officer

Michael Cate, VP Credit Manager

Michael Cleland, VP Commercial Loan Officer

Isaac Davis, VP Commercial Loan Officer

Scott Nichols, VP Commercial Loan Officer

Ryan Frazier, VP Commercial Loan Officer 2

Beth Hurd, VP Commercial Loan Portfolio Officer

Lynda Paquette, VP Commercial Loan Administration

Brian Smith, VP Commercial Portfolio Loan Officer

## RESIDENTIAL LENDING

Jaime Frederes, SVP Residential Mortgage Lending

Garry Cornelius, VP Residential Mortgage Sales, NMLS #1185487

Stephanie Burnor, AVP Mortgage Operations Officer

Chelsea Gardner, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #2361321

Shannon Ketcham, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #2153077

Fredric Johnson, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #827462

Brooklyn McBee, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #2300197

Jake Potter, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #914418

## RESIDENTIAL LENDING *(continued)*

Pamela Starr, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #211840

Matthew Thomas, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #523419

Mary Tillotson, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #523420

Robert Whittaker, Mortgage Loan Officer, NMLS #191114

## RETAIL BANKING

Brad Kulacz, SVP Senior Retail Banking Officer

Stephanie Andruss, RVP Branch Manager

Rachel Perri, RVP Branch Manager

Michelle Olivier, RVP Branch Manager

Julie Bushaw, VP Retail Sales & Service Staff Development & CRA Officer

Kristin Clark, VP Business Banking Development Officer

Silvia Croteau, AVP Branch & Business Development Manager

Brittany Saucier, AVP Branch & Business Development Manager

Ivana Maxwell, Retail Training and Development Officer

Deborah Stoodley, Branch & Business Development Manager

Beth Mulleavey, Branch & Business Development Manager

Christine Larocque, Branch & Business Development Manager

Luis Colon, Branch & Business Development Manager

Mark Hurley, Branch & Business Development Manager

Shantelle Sutkus, AVP Business Development Officer

## CONSUMER LENDING

Arthur Letendre, SVP Consumer Loan Officer

Carol Ritchie, VP Consumer Loan Officer

## MARKETING

Diana Johnson, VP Marketing Officer

Kelly Wright, Marketing Communications Officer

# President's Message



2024 was a year for growth and forging new connections as we focused on the importance of banking locally and reinvesting back into the neighborhoods where we live, work and play. Together, we stepped up to show that The Merrimack is more than just a bank, we're an educational resource and advocate for local organizations that strengthen our community.

We started the year off strong with an unexpected opportunity to open a new branch in Henniker, and we hit the ground running. On September 17, the community joined us for the grand opening of our 9th branch, located on 262 Maple Street.

At The Merrimack, we believe education is empowerment, so we've been busy offering free seminars to the public on the following topics: Construction Lending, First-Time Homebuying, Financial Literacy and Fraud Prevention.

We're grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Concord High School Adult Education Program and Overcomers Refugee Services. In our efforts to educate and protect the public from rampant fraud and scammers, we're continuing to spread awareness across multiple mediums of communication and have more seminars planned for 2025.

What better way to wrap up our year, than to give back with our Annual Mitten Tree Drive. In total, we collected 2,500 new and handmade mittens, gloves, hats and scarves across our nine branches to distribute to local non-profits in need. To sweeten the initiative, for every item collected we pledged \$2.00 to community food pantries, totaling \$5,000 in donations. However, due to the generosity of our customers, community and local knitters, The Merrimack made \$6,500 in donations to eight pantries throughout our service areas.

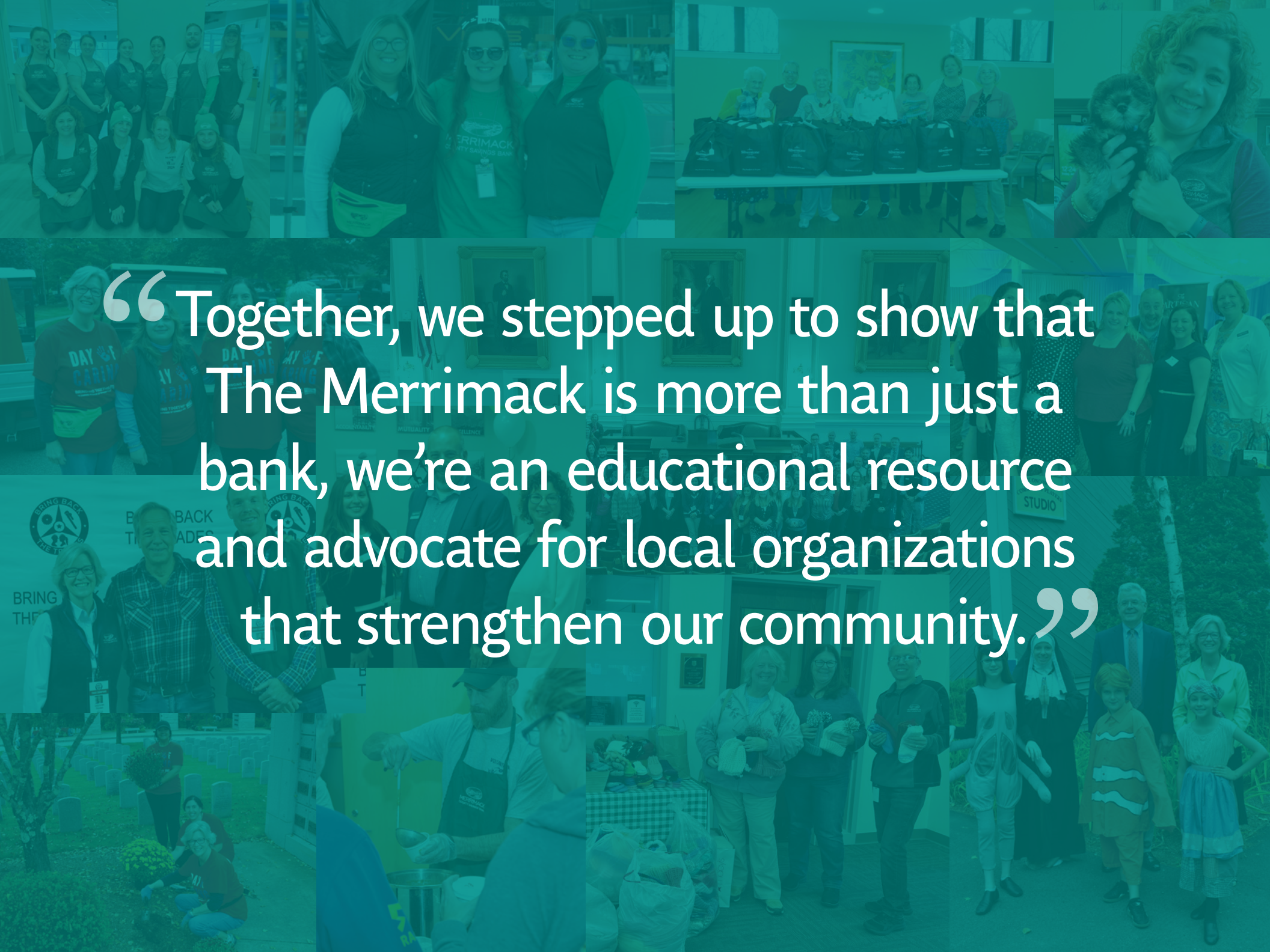
In 2024, we also recognized the achievements and service milestones of nine employees who have been with us for 5, 10, 15, and 25 years. Congratulations to Shantelle Sutkus, Pam Starr, Brittany Parr and Terrie McQuillen on 5 years; Kris Clark, Brooklyn McBee-Moran and Debbie Simoneau on 10 years; Stephanie Andruss on 15 years; and Brenda Pvirre on an amazing 25 years with The Merrimack. Their dedicated service has made The Merrimack a stronger, better community bank.

I'm so proud of our tradition of giving back and providing services to those most in need, and I continue to be thankful for our employees, our customers and our community.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LJL', written in a cursive style.

Linda J. Lorden  
President



“Together, we stepped up to show that The Merrimack is more than just a bank, we’re an educational resource and advocate for local organizations that strengthen our community.”



**MERRIMACK**  
COUNTY SAVINGS BANK

NMLS #433938

