



United Community Banks, Inc. Completes Acquisition of Southern Bancorp, Inc.

Deposit Market Share Increases Substantially in Cherokee, Cobb Counties

BLAIRSVILLE, GA, Dec 04, 2006 (MARKET WIRE via COMTEX News Network) -- United Community Banks, Inc. (NASDAQ: UCBI) has completed its acquisition of Southern Bancorp, Inc., and its wholly owned subsidiary Southern National Bank ("Southern National"). At September 30, 2006, Southern had assets of \$346 million and deposits of approximately \$101 million and \$205 million in Cherokee County and Cobb County, Georgia, respectively.

Steve Holcomb, who was president and CEO of Southern National, is president and CEO of the newly formed United Community Bank - Cherokee, which becomes United's 26th community bank. Holcomb was born in Cherokee County and has spent most of his 32-year banking career there.

The acquisition increases United's deposit market share in Cherokee County from fifteenth to ninth. Cherokee County was the seventh fastest-growing large county in the country from 2000 to 2006 and is expected to grow by 34 percent in the next five years. Total deposits in Cherokee County were \$2.8 billion.

The acquisition also boosts United Community Bank's presence in Cobb County by adding an office on the square in downtown Marietta and increasing deposit market share from fourteenth to seventh. United Community Bank - Metro now has five offices in Cobb County, which is the fourth largest of 28 counties in the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area. From 2000 to 2006, Cobb County was among the top 50 fastest growing counties in the United States. Total deposits in Cobb County are \$9.6 billion.

"Expanding in northern metro Atlanta is a strategic priority for United," said Jimmy Tallent, president and chief executive officer of United Community Banks. "We have completed our system conversions and will begin realizing operating efficiencies immediately. The primary value that will be created by this merger, however, comes from combining our banking teams. Because there is almost no overlap of existing customers or calling efforts, together we can expand and deepen customer relationships in both markets. Southern National's team of bankers bring over 600 years of service in Cobb County and over 300 years of service in Cherokee County, which will provide strong momentum from the start."

Holcomb said, "United plans to add two banking offices in Cherokee County during 2007, bringing the total number to four. We have a great opportunity to significantly expand our franchise in Cherokee over the next year and beyond. A community bank with larger-bank resources like United can be a market leader in Cherokee County, and that is our intention."

United Community Bank is the largest community bank in metro Atlanta with nine banks and 34 banking offices and assets of \$2.1 billion.

About United Community Banks, Inc.

Headquartered in Blairsville, United Community Banks is the third-largest bank holding company in Georgia. United Community Banks has assets of \$6.5 billion and operates 26 community banks with 99 banking offices located throughout north Georgia, metro Atlanta, coastal Georgia, western North Carolina and east Tennessee. The company specializes in providing personalized community banking services to individuals and small to mid-size businesses. United Community Banks also offers the convenience of 24-hour access through a network of ATMs, telephone and on-line banking. United Community Banks common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol UCBI. Additional information may be found at the company's web site at www.ucbi.com.

Safe Harbor

This news release contains forward-looking statements as defined by Federal Securities Laws including statements about financial outlook and business environment. These statements are provided to assist in the understanding of future financial performance and such performance involves risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those in such statements. Any such statements are based on current expectations and involve a number of risks and uncertainties. For a discussion of factors that may cause such forward-looking statements to differ materially from actual results, please refer to the section entitled "Forward-Looking Statements" on page 4 of United Community Banks, Inc.'s annual report filed on Form 10-K with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

For more information:

Rex S. Schuette
Chief Financial Officer
706-781-2265

SOURCE: United Community Banks, Inc.