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Premier Bank Hosts E-Green Ribbon Cutting to Celebrate Petal Certification

Dubuque, IA (August 27, 2012) – Dubuque businesses are leading the sustainability movement in Eastern Iowa through their participation in the Petal Project, a green business certification program. The Petal Project is proud to announce that Premier Bank has completed all of the certification criteria and is now a Petal Certified business. This announcement positions Premier Bank as the fourth business to achieve all requirements and become fully Petal Certified following Finley Hospital (2010), Loras College (2011), and Dubuque Bank & Trust (2012).

Premier Bank is parting with the traditional green ribbon cutting, in favor of a more sustainable option. Premier Bank has opted to celebrate the organization's dedication to environmental sustainability through completion of the Petal Project by hosting an e-green ribbon cutting. The green ribbon cutting is available for viewing on the Premier Bank website (www.premierbanking.com) starting Monday, August 27th through Monday, September 10th. "Premier Bank has been actively working to reduce the amount of travel between offices for face to face meetings and instead opting for teleconferences. Thus, having an e-green ribbon cutting instead of asking everyone to get into their cars (mostly by themselves) and drive across town to the green ribbon cutting better aligns with our sustainability goals," stated SVP Operations and Sustainability Coordinator, Todd Link. Premier Bank hosted the green ribbon cutting with their employees internally and recorded it for Internet broadcast. The rest of the ribbon cutting is "virtual" in nature via electronic communication and media announcements. Link added "It is just another small step we are taking toward making a smaller environmental footprint."

Premier Bank has been a supporter of sustainable living principles for many years. These principles have been implemented into their everyday business practices and shared with customers. Several years ago Premier Bank created a sustainable loan pool which provides lower interest loans for commercial projects that are aimed at improving energy efficiency and other resources (windows, doors, insulation, etc). For Premier, participating in the Petal Project was a natural extension of their core business belief in being responsible stewards of our natural resources. Through the Petal Project process, they have increased employee education on waste reduction and energy conservation-both in the workplace and at home. In addition, they have increased the deployment of energy efficient lighting, increased their use of low flow faucets, expanded materials that are recycled, installed motion activated lighting in a variety of "lower use" areas as well as decreased paper consumption through copier duplexing, and the use of email and electronic documentation in lieu of paper documentation within the bank.

Todd Link notes, "The Petal Project gave us time to pause and rethink a good majority of our daily tasks at the bank and ask ourselves if a paper copy was necessary or if an electronic version could be substituted. For example we created an Intranet to reduce the sending and printing of bank emails. This one project will result in a significant reduction in our overall paper consumption. During the process we became so much more aware of electronic workflow."

To become certified, Premier Bank completed all of the mandatory and a specified number of optional criteria within each of the five concentration areas: waste reduction, energy conservation, staff education, pollution prevention, and water conservation. "The Petal Project's real strength is that it is comprehensive in nature," Link said. "To become certified we reviewed processes, products, and looked for increased educational opportunities for our employees. I can proudly proclaim that being a sustainable business is not only a good environmental position, but we have been able to

save money as a result of our efforts to reduce consumption of our natural resources. I would encourage all businesses contemplating the process to give it a sincere effort. The cost savings alone can often be significant.”

For Premier Bank, Petal Certification is a checkpoint on their long journey to sustainability. “The Petal Project is a great honor to signify reaching a level of success at this given time. For Premier Bank, however, the process is never ending. Our sustainability committee will challenge themselves for ‘what’s next’ as we move our company toward increased levels of conservation and reducing our environmental footprint. The beautiful thing about many individuals and businesses making small changes is that collectively these changes become significant and quite meaningful to our environment and the quality of life we enjoy in the community.”

Additional information on the Petal Project certification program and Premier Bank’s accomplishments can be found at www.Petal-Project.com.

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For more information, or to schedule an interview, please call Kelsey McElroy-Anderson at 563.690.5738 or email her at kmcelroy@ecia.org.

The Petal Project is a regional green business certification program designed to encourage organizations in the Dubuque area to adopt environmentally friendly business practices. The program provides businesses with a simple framework for saving money and resources while establishing a community-wide definition of a green business for consumers wishing to shop based on their values.

The Petal Project is divided into five categories: pollution prevention, water conservation, waste reduction, energy conservation, staff education. Within each category, a business must complete all of the mandatory and a specified number of optional criteria to earn that petal. Once a business has earned all five petals, it is “Petal Certified”.

There are currently twenty-eight businesses in Dubuque County participating in the program: Finley Hospital, Loras College, Dubuque Bank & Trust, Premier Bank, American Trust, Calico Bean, City of Dubuque (City Hall and Municipal Services Center), Clarke University, Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, Contempo Salon Spa, Cottingham & Butler, Cumulus Broadcasting, Dubuque Data Services, DuTrac, East Central Intergovernmental Association, Four Mounds Bed & Breakfast, Gronen Restoration, IIW, P.C., Jitterz Coffee & Café, MSA Professional Services, Premier Tooling, Inc., River Lights Bookstore, The Food Store, St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Tender Tradition Childcare, Unified Therapy Services, U.S. Cellular, and Welu Printing.