



THE
STEPHENSON
National Bank & Trust

Contact: Laura E. Rowe
Marketing Officer
laura.rowe@snbt.com
715.735.2380

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Three SNBT Bankers Earn Prestigious National Certification

Diane Gromoske, Karen Lahay, and Beth Larson, Personal Bankers at The Stephenson National Bank & Trust (SNBT), recently earned the prestigious Certified IRA Services Professional (CISP) designation from the Institute of Certified Bankers (ICB). This designation is awarded to individuals who have participated in a stringent training process and passed certification testing. In addition, each professional must abide by a strict code of ethics and complete continuing education in order to retain their certification. An Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is a tool for retirement savings. Unlike other investments, IRA contributions may be tax deductible and will grow either tax-deferred or tax-free.

“With IRAs, just as other areas of the bank, we have taken an active role in gaining advanced certifications through additional schooling,” said John Reinke, SNBT President. “This allows us to stand apart from other financial institutions in our region by having the largest group of accredited employees ready to serve our customers’ needs. By being proactive and looking ahead to the future, we can anticipate the needs of our community in order to provide unsurpassed IRA servicing.”

To pass the rigorous exam, students must participate in over 30 hours of intensive instruction plus countless hours of study. The curriculum, taught by authorities on IRAs, is designed to develop advanced skills and provide a thorough understanding of IRA principles, which will allow these Personal Bankers to better assist customers with their needs. The CISP exam covers many areas, including employer plans, requirements, plan portability, estate planning, and other IRA specific issues. To prepare for the intense certification process, the SNBT employees attended a demanding five-day course in Denver, CO.

“This training could not come at a more important time for our customers. It has been indicated that there will be more than 75 million baby boomers retiring in the coming years,” Reinke said. “These individuals will need specific guidance from our knowledgeable team who can assist them with moving their assets from employer-



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sponsored retirement plans to IRAs, and properly handling IRA distributions to maximize their income during retirement.”

The CISP certification was designed to establish meaningful standards of knowledge and competency for IRA professionals, give formal recognition to those who meet prescribed standards, and meet continuing professional education and development requirements. The ICB, with 8,000 certified members, provides financial services professionals with confidence, credibility, and recognition through its certifications. As a subsidiary of the American Bankers Association, ICB promotes the highest standards of performance in the financial services industry by validating individuals’ knowledge and expertise.

The Stephenson National Bank & Trust is a 136-year old independent community bank with assets of \$277 million and Trust and Investment assets exceeding \$300 million. Offices are located in Marinette and Oconto, Wis. and Menominee, Mich. For more information about The Stephenson National Bank & Trust visit www.snbt.com.

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