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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AMERICANWEST BANK RECEIVES \$185 MILLION CAPITAL INVESTMENT  
IN SALE TO SKBHC HOLDINGS**

(Spokane, Washington) AmericanWest Bank of Spokane and its Far West Bank division in Utah today were acquired by SKBHC Holdings, LLC.

"A new chapter for AmericanWest Bank begins now," said SKBHC chairman and chief executive officer Scott A. Kisting.

AmericanWest Bank received a \$185 million capital injection from SKBHC as part of the acquisition and it will significantly strengthen its capital position.

"We will build on the existing foundation to create a high-performing community bank-one that is based on relationship banking in the finest sense of the term," Kisting said.

Kisting will serve as President and CEO of AmericanWest Bank. James R. Claffee will serve as the bank's chief operating officer.

"AmericanWest has great strengths in its customers, employees and communities. We are very excited about the opportunities ahead," Claffee said.

Kisting led the formation of SKBHC Holdings LLC in December 2009. It has funding commitments of \$750 million from major private equity investors, as well as public and private pension funds.

"This is the start of a dynamic period of strengthening relationships with customers and expanding our franchise when possible," Kisting said.

As previously announced, the deal consisted of SKBHC purchasing all outstanding shares of the Bank from the prior holding company, AmericanWest Bancorporation, for \$6.5 million and investing an additional \$185 million of new capital in the Bank. Patrick Rusnak, immediate past President and CEO of AmericanWest Bank, will stay on to assist through the transition.

AmericanWest Bank operates 40 financial centers in Eastern Washington and North Idaho and 18 in Utah, under the name Far West Bank. It employs more than 500 and is headquartered in Spokane. As of December 20, 2010, after the closing of the sale, AmericanWest Bank had total assets of approximately \$1.6 billion.

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