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**FIRST SOUTHWEST BANK ESTABLISHES COMMUNITY FUND**  
***New Non-Profit Fund Will Support Efforts to Improve Economic Environment in Core Service Area***

**ALAMOSA, COLO., (Jan. 20, 2016)** - First Southwest Bank has established First Southwest Community Fund to support community-based projects by leveraging both public and private funding. Through promoting economic development in distressed areas, the newly formed Community Fund will help create jobs, encourage development of vital infrastructure and provide new educational opportunities for identified at-risk populations.

"Through the First Southwest Community Fund, we hope to address a critical public need by creating tangible economic opportunities for those we serve," said First Southwest Bank's CEO Kent Curtis. "The Community Fund will also allow us to expand developmental programs designed to enhance the overall jobs environment in Southwestern Colorado and beyond. We see this as an important step forward for the entire Four Corners region."

First Southwest Community Fund is a 501c3 non-profit that works in partnership with First Southwest Bank, a U.S. Treasury certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Together they provide loans and grants to realize important local initiatives such as creating new jobs in rural communities, assisting workers in obtaining higher-wage jobs and strengthening financial literacy among members of underserved communities.

The Community Fund also seeks economic development projects that provide broad benefits for entire population areas. These projects could include health and childcare facilities, housing developments, grocery stores and healthy food programs in addition to those that improve overall community infrastructure such as high-speed internet access, libraries, levies and more.

"Initially, the First Southwest Community Fund will focus on small businesses and vital community infrastructure as well as financially empowering individuals located within the 11 Southwestern Colorado counties we currently serve," Curtis added. "We will center our efforts on areas where unemployment is higher, family income is lower and educational attainment is stagnant as we continue to deploy the initiative throughout the Four Corners region."

Information on First Southwest Community Fund is available at [firstsouthwestcommunity.org](http://firstsouthwestcommunity.org) while further details on First Southwest Bank and its CDFI designation are at [fswb.com](http://fswb.com)

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