



NEWS RELEASE

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Bank's Digital Video Series Highlights Local Businesses & Nonprofits as Partners in St. Louis "Rising Together"

ST. LOUIS (May 19, 2022) – A new digital video series with **Midwest BankCentre** clients as featured stars launched May 18. Produced by St. Louis-based **Coolfire Studios**, which has produced shows for HGTV and Discovery Network, the segments feature Chairman and CEO **Orvin T. Kimbrough** with customers at their headquarters and in the community. The videos are being distributed on the bank's social media channels, including YouTube and Facebook.

The rollout features three organizations with a vested interest in the St. Louis community, including **Easterseals Midwest**, **Kuna Foodservice** and **AJ Wellness Pharmacy**. Easterseals Midwest, part of the community for more than 100 years, helps unlock the potential in every person and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. Kuna Foodservice, which started as a small family-owned butcher shop in 1918, is a Main Street business that now distributes food products and supplies to restaurants and other businesses in a 15-state region. AJ Wellness Pharmacy was launched by a female Bosnian immigrant to serve a community in South St. Louis where strong immigrant presence attracts customers speaking five different languages.

An outspoken advocate for widening access to opportunity and capital to all citizens, Kimbrough said, "At Midwest BankCentre, community is more than a place, it's a way of life. Our purpose is to help our regional communities thrive and this

series highlights the fact that to succeed as a region, we must succeed as a people. We believe people can make a difference in our region simply by choosing where they bank. When institutions and individuals partner with locally owned and locally focused banks on their checking and savings accounts, we are able to deploy capital in the form of loans for local families, businesses and nonprofits.”

To bring bank customers’ stories to life, **Danielle Bateman Girondo**, executive vice president of marketing at Midwest BankCentre, partnered with **Jeremy Corray**, executive vice president of digital entertainment at Coolfire Studios. “The hyper-local focus of this series and our use of a local business in producing the videos reflects our values in action,” said Bateman Girondo. “We consciously choose to foster partnerships with clients, vendors and the community that help create the conditions for everyone in the region to prosper.”

Since 2019, Bateman Girondo has led the bank’s omnichannel marketing to differentiate St. Louis’ second largest locally owned community bank from others in an industry that has become highly commoditized. “We anticipate our online video series will connect with the community values our customers have around making capital and opportunity accessible to everyone in our community,” she said. “These videos show the ripple effect of customer deposits reinvested locally that amplify impact and uplift everyone by growing our capacity to prosper together and meet community needs.”

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Editor’s note: The Rising Together Series can be seen at this link: [Rising Together Series](#).

[About Midwest BankCentre](#)

Midwest BankCentre’s current assets exceed \$2.3 billion and deposits total more than \$1.8 billion. A mainstay of the greater St. Louis community banking scene

since 1906, the bank employs a staff of about 280 working at 18 bank locations in the City of St. Louis, St. Louis, Jefferson and St. Charles counties in Missouri and St. Clair County in Illinois. It empowers people, enables business and energizes neighborhoods through the strength of its financial services. Midwest BankCentre bank is a local leader in the St. Louis Regional Financial Empowerment Coalition and its Bank-On Save-Up St. Louis initiative. Since 2001, Midwest BankCentre has consecutively achieved the Bauer Financial 5-Star Superior financial rating each quarter. It has won national banking industry awards for its success in bringing mainstream financial services to unbanked and underbanked citizens in the region and other diversity and inclusion contributions.

[About Coolfire Studios](#)

Based in St. Louis, Missouri, Coolfire Studios is a content creation studio that specializes in commercial production, branded content for digital platforms and television shows. With a strong DNA for storytelling, Coolfire Studios goes beyond the traditional production company by using digital marketing to drive audiences and social engagement to help ensure the content's success. The company has produced work for networks such as HGTV, Discovery Network, Esquire, Magnolia Network, History Channel and worked with agency partners on brands such as Amazon, AT&T, Toyota, Smoothie King, Purina, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Brown and Crouppen Law Firm, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Build-A-Bear, Eyecare Partners and more.