



# THE FLAGSHIP

Issue: 14  
June 2015

A Publication for Aquesta Customers & Shareholders

## Letter from the CEO



Aquesta continues to grow and prosper. That is the theme of my message to you in this issue of Flagship.

Since the ending of the recession, Aquesta realized extraordinary growth in its loan portfolio with greater than 30 percent year over year growth. This translates directly into increased earnings for our shareholders with more than 15 percent per share earnings increase. The earnings increases are lower than loan growth only because we are investing additional resources for enhanced profits going forward.

What are these "investments"? First, we are hiring experienced lenders for key markets. Since I last wrote to you, we have hired market leading lenders for the city of Concord, an experienced commercial lender for Charlotte and one of the leading SBA lenders in North Carolina. Additionally, we recently announced the purchase of a former Certus branch located in a very desirable and visible area of Charlotte.

While accelerating growth and earnings, we haven't forgotten about the importance of asset quality. We are building our business by providing outstanding service to true banking relationships. Consequently, our asset quality continues to improve to the point that we are an industry leader here too. Finally, let's discuss our stock price (Symbol AQFH). This is an area over which management has little direct control other than delivering superior earnings and growth. Soon, we will begin organized and systematic market outreach to the investor community to share our story of success and solicit investor interest in sharing in that success through an investment. While we can't promise results, I think our story is compelling and will be well received.

Thank you once again for your support.

Best regards,

Jim Engel

President & CEO

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday, July 22nd**

**South Park Branch Ribbon Cutting**  
11:00 AM  
4519 Sharon Road, Charlotte  
Light Refreshments to follow

**Saturday, October 3rd**

**South Park Branch Grand Opening (tentative)**  
4519 Sharon Road, Charlotte  
11:00 am - 3:00 pm



Give us a call today to learn more about a great Home Equity Line of Credit special!"

(704) 439-4343



## AQUESTA ANNOUNCES INDEPENDENT RANKING AS NUMBER 2 COMMUNITY BANK IN NC

In September, Aquesta Bank was ranked as the 2nd overall best performing bank of the 67 community banks in North Carolina.

An investment banking firm based in Atlanta which focuses on community banks (Bank Street Partners) issued a report ranking banks throughout the Southeast using 5 equally weighted criteria (Asset Quality, Net Interest Margin, Return on Equity, Non Interest Income and Overhead). Based on these criteria, Aquesta Bank was

ranked number 2 behind Surrey Bank located in Surrey County. See Bank Street Partners' website to download the full report at <http://banksstreetpartners.com>.

Aquesta Bank's CEO & President, Jim Engel stated "We are very happy to have received such an outstanding ranking compared to very strong competition. I believe our results are directly related to the unsurpassed service provided by our outstanding team members and community support. Of course, to paraphrase an old commercial, as number 2 we intend to try harder." Engel continued, "I am extremely grateful for the hard work of the Aquesta team and the loyalty of the Aquesta customers."

Aquesta has a branch in Davidson, two branches in Cornelius, two branches in Mooresville one branch in Huntersville and will be celebrating the grand opening of its Charlotte branch in July 2015.

BANK NEAR. GO FAR.



## AQUESTA BANK BUYS CERTUSBANK BRANCH IN SOUTHPARK

Aquesta Bank is pleased to announce we are expanding into the Charlotte market through a purchase of a branch location of CertusBank in the coveted Southpark area of Charlotte, NC.

The branch is located at 4519 Sharon Rd in the Sharon Station Office Park directly across from the main entrance of Southpark Mall. The branch will open on July 13, 2015. The conversion will not impact the day to day banking at this location or with CertusBank and will be seamless to customers.

Aquesta is excited to bring its personalized and creative banking approach to the Charlotte market with this new flagship branch. Aquesta Bank CEO, Jim Engel stated, "We are very happy to welcome the CertusBank customers to Aquesta. I am confident they will appreciate the caring, knowledgeable service Aquesta offers. We will strive to make the transition not only seamless but - believe it or not - enjoyable. For our current customers, we believe this location will greatly enhance the ease of banking with their favorite bank when shopping or working in the Southpark area.

Read more: [www.nasdaq.com/press-release/aquesta-bank-purchases-certusbank-branch-in-southpark-20150331-00648#ixzz3dnryKzLZ](http://www.nasdaq.com/press-release/aquesta-bank-purchases-certusbank-branch-in-southpark-20150331-00648#ixzz3dnryKzLZ)



AQUESTA BANK

## AQUESTA WINS SBA AWARD!

Aquesta Bank is pleased to announce that it has received the prestigious SBA Achievement Award for 2014. The award is given each year to recognize a lender who has experienced significant year over year growth in SBA loans. Aquesta Bank experienced the largest percentage growth of SBA lending in the Lake Norman area as well as securing a spot as one of the top 10 largest SBA loan makers in dollar amount in all of North Carolina as of the end of the second quarter 2015. Congratulations to Tim Anderson, SBA Lending Manager, and Aquesta Bank!



Pictured from left to right: Gary Gallo (VP/Senior Credit Underwriter, Aquesta Bank), Lynn Douthett (District Director of the SBA), Jim Engel (President and CEO, Aquesta Bank), Diana Mullen (Loan Operations Specialist, Aquesta Bank), Tim Anderson (Aquesta Bank SBA Lending Manager), Karen Hoskins (Lead Lender Relations Specialist, SBA)



## AQUESTA BANK RECEIVES 2014 CITIZEN'S CHOICE AWARD FOR "OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT"

Aquesta Bank is proud to have received a 2014 Citizen's Choice Award for "Outstanding Community Involvement." Readers of The Lake Norman Citizen were asked to nominate members of the local business community for awards across several categories, with the winners to be decided by members of their advisory board. The contest was intentionally designed to reward quality over quantity. It wasn't about the number of coworkers, friends and family who nominated a particular business; it was about the quality of the nomination. We are grateful for being recognized in the community we love to serve and thankful to the Lake Norman Citizen and the panel of judges for this recognition.

## WELCOME HOME VETERANS HONORS AQUESTA BANK

On Thursday, May 14th, Welcome Home Veterans unveiled a permanent plaque of appreciation for Aquesta Bank's support of a special veterans museum, Richard's Coffee Shop, in Mooresville, NC, with over 100 people attending the special celebration. Aquesta Bank helped Richard's Coffee Shop achieve their dream of helping support the many veterans and their families who have given so much to our country by matching dollar for dollar, \$25,000 toward the purchase of a building in downtown Mooresville. Aquesta is proud to support our Veterans!



### Aquesta Bank

**Cornelius (Main Office)**  
19510 Jetton Rd. | 704-439-4343

**Williamson Rd Branch**  
837 Williamson Rd (Mooresville) | 704-439-1440

**Downtown Cornelius Branch**  
20121 North Main Street, Ste. A | 704-439-1420

**Huntersville Branch**  
9906 Knockando Lane | 704-439-1430

**Davidson Branch**  
568 Jetton St | 704-439-4350

**Brawley School Rd Branch**  
1078 Brawley School Rd (Mooresville) | 704-439-1450

**Huntersville Branch**  
9906 Knockando Lane | 704-439-1430

**SouthPark Branch**  
4519 Sharon Road (Charlotte) | 704-804-7930.

### Aquesta Insurance

**Cornelius Office**  
19510 Jetton Rd. | 704-892-6411

**Mooresville Office**  
837 Williamson Rd | 704-809-1285

**Wilmington Office**  
700 Military Cutoff Rd. | 910-794-6100

