



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Aquesta Bank Announces Selection by Two Independent Investment Banking Firms as a Top Bank in 2016

CORNELIUS, NC – August 25, 2016 -- Aquesta Bank is pleased to announce that it has been selected by two independent investment banking firms as being one of the top banks in North Carolina. Aquesta Bank is the primary subsidiary of Aquesta Financial Holdings, Inc. and is headquartered in Cornelius with seven branches in North Carolina. (OTC Market symbol AQFH).

The Investment Banking firms of Bank Street Partners and Hovde Group each used their own methodology and criteria but independently determined that Aquesta Bank is one of the top banks in the state.

Bank Street Partners (see report at: <http://BanksStreetPartners.com/bsp-downloads/>) looked at net interest margins, non interest income, total overhead costs, asset quality, and return on equity. Based on these criteria, Aquesta was ranked number 6 of the top 50 North Carolina Banks.

Hovde Group (report available by contacting that firm) used similar criteria but also included Loan Growth. Aquesta was ranked number 5 in loan growth out of 64 banks but ranked number 2 in loan growth when excluding mergers. In other words, Aquesta Bank had the second highest organic loan growth in North Carolina.

Jim Engel, CEO and President of Aquesta, said “I’m very pleased with our loan growth that far exceeds industry norms and I’m also satisfied Aquesta was able to achieve this growth while maintaining both good net interest margins and excellent loan quality. This growth is directly attributable to steps we announced more than two years ago to invest in people to achieve growth.”

For additional information, please contact Kristin Couch (Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer) at 704-439-4343 or visit us online at www.aquesta.com.