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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Aquesta Bank Announced as Winner of Champions of Diversity Award for Small Business by Lake Norman Chamber

CORNELIUS, NC – September 22, 2016 -- Aquesta Bank is pleased to announce that it has been named by the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce as the 2016 Small Business Champion of Diversity. The award recognizes businesses for their efforts to promote diversity and inclusiveness in their hiring, management and marketing practices. Presenting the award was Chris Hailey, the branch manager at Securitas USA Charlotte and the chamber's diversity council chairman.

Cornelius-based Aquesta Bank, established in 2006, was the finalist in the small business category. "Their support of small business is profound, and they first started in a basement, growing into a significant financial institution," Hailey said. Aquesta CEO Jim Engel said the company strives to promote diversity through numerous official and unofficial events and programs. "We hire highly qualified candidates without regard for race, gender, religion. But that's just the beginning," Engel said. "Almost 75 percent of our employees are women, including two of four executive vice presidents."

The award was presented at an annual luncheon at River Run Country Club in Davidson, to celebrate workplace diversity. The event was attended by approximately 80 business and community leaders.

For additional information, please contact Jim Engel (President and CEO) at 704-439-4343 or visit us online at www.aquesta.com.