

THE INDEPENDENT

Keeping you independently connected.

Special Pride & Glory Edition

May 2007, Volume I, Issue No. 1

*A Special Message from
Michael Weiss, President
and
Bob Summa, National Sales Manager*

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We are pleased to bring you the first issue of Independent Financial's quarterly newsletter, *The Independent*. This first issue is a special Pride & Glory edition devoted to all of our 2007 President's Council and Executive Council Members. Future issues of *The Independent* will include timely news alerts, legislative updates, product developments, marketing campaigns, success stories and much more. The newsletter will be distributed each quarter via e-mail.

2007 marked another successful and enjoyable Pride & Glory! Both events were held at the Desert Springs Marriott Resort and Spa. The programs featured dynamic speakers, excellent company, good food, lively entertainment and an overall sense of camaraderie. Next year's Pride will be held at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix from March 13th-16th, 2008 and Glory will be at the Phoenician in Scottsdale, AZ from March 16th-20th.

On behalf of everyone at Independent Financial, we want to again congratulate all of you on a job well done, and we look forward to an even bigger and better Pride & Glory in 2008. Enjoy this first issue!



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2007 President's



From left to right: M. Weiss, C. Walter, S. Silber, A. Reali, E. Montagna, C. Michaels, R. Rodriguez, F. Montemayor, J. Sedberry (former Member), A. Keating, J. Fermano, J. Pierce, C. Proctor, L. Chodash, P. Duquette, M. Mauceli, S. Sapra, R. Summa, S. Sewell, H. Cooperman (L. Wolfson and J. Erdman are not pictured)

The President's Council is comprised of the top producers from among all of our programs. The Council holds conference calls and partakes in two meetings each year at which feedback about existing company programs is solicited and plans for new programs are discussed. We value the input of this Council and we are proud to give them a forum to have their voices heard individually and collectively. Congratulations to all 2007 President's Council Members!

Christopher Walter

Susquehanna Bancshares

Chris has been with Susquehanna since June of 2001, and with Independent Financial since February of 2003. A President's Council Member for four years, Chris performs in-depth financial planning, fee comparisons and peer analysis to insure the best possible portfolio for his clients, and focuses on building long-term relationships with them. In 2005 and 2006, Chris ranked second out of 400 registered representatives with IFMG Securities, Inc.

Fernando Montemayor, Jr.

IBC Bank

Fernando has been with Independent Financial for five years, and a President's Council member for three years. His success stems from putting his clients' needs above all else. Fernando has developed good working relationships with everyone on the bank side and has earned their trust and respect. He really works his book of business and is not afraid to "ask for more business."

Lawrence Chodash

Sovereign Bank

Lawrence has been with Independent Financial since September of 2006. He started with Essex National Securities and Independence Community Bank in 1999. He qualified for the President's Council for the first time this year. Lawrence believes being a part of the "TEAM" makes him the success he is. Keeping his staff/LBEs updated with rates and product knowledge is also very important. Lawrence displays his dedication by being one of the first ones in and one of the last ones to leave, including weekends.

Anthony Reali

TruMark Financial Credit Union

Tony joined Independent Financial seven years ago. He has been a President's Council Member for four of those seven years. Tony believes that maintaining the highest level of branch staff relations and customer service is a key to his success. Ask Tony and he will tell you that "good things happen through good relationships."

Andrew James Keating III

Astoria Federal Savings Bank

Andrew has been with Independent Financial for over nine years. This marks the third time he has been named to the President's Council. Andrew feels his dedication to keeping customers informed and the consistent level of customer service he delivers is what makes him successful and differentiates him from the rest of his competition.

Surya Sapra

Sovereign Bank

A Sovereign Council Member for two of his three years at Sovereign, Surya qualified for the President's Council in 2007. Surya feels his success is directly linked to his focus on his own personal goals. According to Surya, "being in a bank environment, where sometimes you are overwhelmed with issues that tend to disrupt your focus, I personally try my best to minimize any distractions. Of course, it's not always easy, so like everything, it's a learning process. All in all, I think focus, consistency and hard work is at the core of my success."

Carmela Michaels

Sovereign Bank

With Sovereign Bank since 1993 and Independent Financial since 1999, Carmela first qualified for the President's Council in 2000. Carmela firmly believes that her success stems from her organizational skills and her length of service in her branches, where she has built a large book of business. She works hard to uncover additional assets and uses bank personnel as a resource to gain referrals. Carmela believes "clients want to deal with someone who is knowledgeable, trustworthy and professional, and that's how I conduct my business."

Jeffrey B. Pierce

Sovereign Bank

Jeff has been with Independent Financial for eight years. A President's Council Member for two years and a Sovereign Council Member for five years, Jeff is firmly committed to maintaining very strong relationships with branch partners, and, as a result, receives many referrals that way. He is extremely proud to be a member of a team that works so hard and compliments each other so well.

Steven Silber

Astoria Federal Savings Bank

Steve has been with Independent Financial for three years and a President's Council Member for two years. Steve attributes his success to being passionate about what he does. He truly enjoys helping his clients reach their financial goals and tries to incorporate comprehensive financial planning as often as possible. Steve looks at the big picture in terms of what his clients are trying to accomplish and always attempts to find the best solutions for them.

Council Members

Edward Montagna

OceanFirst Bank

Ed joined Independent Financial in 1997 and earned Rookie of the Year honors that same year. He served as Co-Chair of Independent Financial's New York City Council in 1998. Ed earned a seat on Independent Financial's President's Council in 1999 and has qualified for the Council for nine consecutive years. Key to Ed's success is his ability to establish a good rapport with his clients, speaking to them in terms they can easily understand and comprehend.

Joseph A. Fermano

OceanFirst Bank

Joe has been with Independent Financial for nine years. He has been a member of the President's Council for eight years. There are two key factors responsible for Joe's continued success—Service and Communication. Joe takes personal pride and responsibility in servicing his customers day-in and day-out. According to Joe, "solid, consistent, outstanding service mixed with compassion has made the difference in my business. My clients know I care because my actions prove it. People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care!"

Maria Mauceli

Astoria Federal Savings Bank

Maria began as a sales assistant to Paul Boghosian at Astoria in 2003. A New York Council Member for two years, she qualified for the President's Council this year. Maria attributes her success to her dedication and work ethic. Maria says that "my clients are very important to me, and I will always go out of my way to show them just how important they are. I make every effort to be the go-to person with all my clients...my goal is to be an essential part of their life." Maria's other goal is to qualify for the President's Council each and every year.

Sophia Sewell

IBC Bank

Sophia has been with Independent Financial for 13 years. She has been a President's Council Member for 11 consecutive years. Much of Sophia's success can be traced to the way she builds strong relationships with her bankers and her clients. Her hard work at overcoming the many challenging barriers of being a multilingual rep at a Spanish-speaking bank has contributed to her annual success.

Louis Wolfson

Astoria Federal Savings Bank

Louis has been with Independent Financial since 2003. A President's Council Member for three of the four years he's been with Independent Financial, Louis feels his success is a result of his efforts to help "professionalize" his teammates so they can help him achieve his goals. He also feels that building strong relationships with clients is the bedrock of any successful career in sales.

Craig R. Proctor

Sovereign Bank

Craig recently completed his first year with Independent Financial. He hopes this is the first of many years to be named to the President's Council. Craig feels that a client's first impressions are the most important. "If a bank customer has any doubts about your abilities or your level of interest in their business, they'll go around the corner to the next bank." He feels his success comes from his ability to build a rapport with clients in a relatively short period of time. He also credits his sales assistant, Lisa Agosto, and his colleagues for his success.

James Erdman

Astoria Federal Savings Bank

James has been a Financial Consultant with Independent Financial for three years, and became a President's Council Member in 2006. He has found that his greatest achievements resulted from the relationships he forged with his clients. Jim firmly believes that "gaining the customer's trust has been a crucial factor in my overall success."

Roderick Rodriguez

Banco Popular

Roderick has been with Banco Popular for over nine years and with Independent Financial since April of 2003. A New York Council Member the last two years, he qualified for the President's Council for the first time in 2007. Roderick was honorably mentioned in *Bank Investment Consultant Magazine's* Top 50 Bank Reps for 2006. From the branch staff that refers the client to the call center that confirms the appointments to the teller who processes the transaction, Roderick's partnership with the bank personnel is crucial to his overall success.

Paul R. Duquette

Sovereign Bank

Paul has been with Independent Financial for seven years and a President's Council Member for three years. Paul takes a team approach to his business and incorporates his Licensed Bankers and Branch Managers into all facets of his business. "This way customers feel like they are doing business with—and can put their trust in—the entire team at Sovereign."

Henry S. Cooperman

Sovereign Bank

Henry has been with Independent Financial for two years. His Rookie of the Year award in 2005 qualified him for the President's Council in 2006, and his 2006 production qualified him for the 2007 President's Council. Henry attributes much of his success to the strong work ethic of his grandparents who were immigrants and worked hard to achieve their slice of the "American pie." When Henry asked his bank partners what they thought made him successful, they said it was "his strong relationship with his bank partners."



2007 Executive Council

Newly created, the Executive Council recognizes an additional set of top producers. Like the President's Council Members, Independent Financial turns to these individuals for their valuable input and guidance. Congratulations to our new Executive Council Members!

Bob Walker, Jr. *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Christos Hatzis *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Randy Davis *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Dominick Colonna *OceanFirst Bank*

Seana Chung *Banco Popular*

Dominic Milito *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Joe Pannarale *Citizens Financial Bank*

Daniel Gikher *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Ismael Reyes-Retana *IBC Bank*

Joanne Bear *Citizens Bank*

Thomas C. Moehringer *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Barbara Frankel *Susquehanna Bancshares*

Christopher Vazquez *Banco Popular*

Neil Blitz *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

Tasso Koumoulis *Astoria Federal Savings Bank*

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