



The Southern Bancorp 2009 Student Advisory Board of Arkadelphia, Arkansas.

Mission News Third Quarter 2009

President's Message



Phil Baldwin, President & CEO of Southern Bancorp

Southern Reaches \$1 Billion in Assets

In October, Southern Bancorp finalized the acquisition of First National Bank in Blytheville and the Bank of Trumann in the north Delta region of Arkansas. Southern now manages more than \$1 billion in assets and serves more than 80,000 customers across Arkansas and Mississippi.

By combining the resources of a \$1 billion bank with our award-winning community development and asset-building programs, Southern is positioned to help thousands of residents in our expanded target market and begin building communities and changing lives on a regional scale.

> [Learn more about Southern Bancorp's mission](#)

Predatory Lending is History in Arkansas

The last storefront payday lenders in Arkansas closed their doors on July 31. Southern's policy team played a leading role in Arkansans Against Abusive Payday Lending which spearheaded the effort to eliminate predatory lending in the state. As part of Southern's mission to increase the assets of low-income residents, it has been a priority to shut down these predatory lenders which often charge more than 400% annual interest. Arkansas is the fifteenth state to shut down predatory payday lenders. Southern is currently developing a payday loan alternative product scheduled for testing in early 2010.

Downtown Helena Revolving Loan Fund

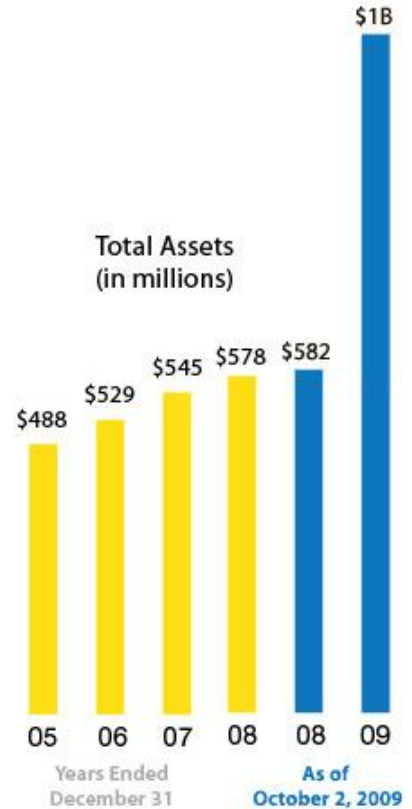


Southern and its partners have recently launched a new loan fund aimed at the revitalization of downtown Helena. The loan fund offers an affordable tool for entrepreneurs and others seeking to open or expand business, renovate historic

property, or create other activities that will bring life to the downtown area. The fund has already seen success with The Edwardian Inn, a historical Victorian home that was converted into a bed and breakfast. The Edwardian Inn Dana and Lynn Chadwick, retired educators, had recently moved to Helena to provide consulting services to a local nonprofit. Upon learning about Southern's low-interest Downtown Revolving Loan Fund, the Chadwicks purchased the facility and reopened it in time for the Helena blues festival.

Learn more about the loan fund and Southern's work to revitalize the Helena-West Helena area by visiting <http://southernbancorp.com>

Southern Bancorp 2009 Growth and Impact

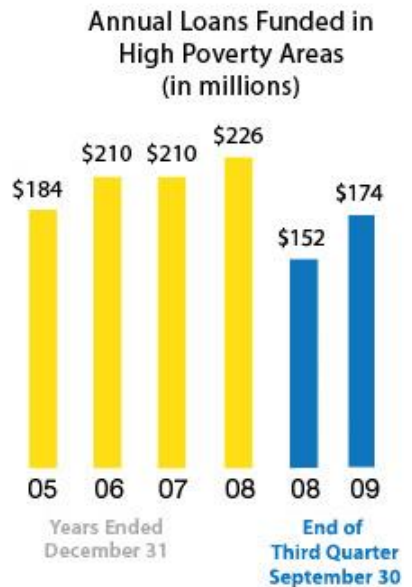


B. B. King Museum



B. B. King Museum With Southern's support, the B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Mississippi, opened to celebrate the life of this iconic artist and the history of the Delta blues and to inspire young artists. Since its opening one year ago, the museum has hosted about 30,000 visitors

from across the world through a rich array of festivals, lectures, songwriting and guitar workshops, and other cultural and educational events. The increase in tourism created by the museum is having a positive impact on the local economy in Indianola and Sunflower County. Increased hotel occupancy and meals, souvenir sales, and other aspects of expanded tourist trade are giving the local tax base a significant boost.



Learn more about B. B. King Museum at www.bbkingmuseum.org

Southern Supports Music & Community Festivals



As a part of its economic development strategy, Southern supported the annual Ruleville Roast and Fall Festival in Mississippi and the Arkansas Blues and Heritage Festival in Helena-West Helena. Each Southern Supports Music and Community Festivals September for more than 30 years, Ruleville residents have gathered downtown in the Ruleville Park for the Annual Ruleville Roast and Fall Festival. The Arkansas Blues and Heritage Festival, formerly known as the King Biscuit Blues Festival, is in its 24th year, is held each October, and brings in an estimated 40,000 visitors each year.

> [Read more Southern news](#)

Southern News Now Available on Twitter and Facebook

Southern news updates are now available through Twitter and Facebook. Follow Southern online at <http://twitter.southernbancorp.com> and <http://facebook.southernbancorp.com> for current news articles and events relating to Southern and its mission.

> [Follow Southern on Twitter](#) > [Follow Southern on Facebook](#)