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First Commerce Empowers Team Members to Start A Wave of Support for Local Businesses

Response Efforts from First Commerce Help Infuse Support for Local Businesses

Tallahassee, FL – Today, First Commerce announced an initiative to start a wave of support for locally owned businesses in the communities it serves. Under the #LocalStrong initiative, First Commerce will distribute more than \$4,000 among more than 150 team members to spend with local businesses in their community between Friday, March 27, and Sunday, March 29. The launch of #LocalStrong seeks to support local businesses who are feeling the impact of closures related to COVID-19 and inspire a wave of support from other businesses and individuals.

As a local credit union serving more than 55,000 consumer and business members across North Florida and South Georgia, First Commerce continues to understand the vital role small businesses play in fueling our local economy.

“As the impact of the Coronavirus continues to unfold, we are deeply committed to serving our team members, members, local businesses, and communities through these difficult times and beyond – and we realize they need a wave of support right now,” said First Commerce CEO Cecilia Homison. “We are rooted in our communities and wanted to find a meaningful way to let local businesses know we are still here for them. This initiative is a win-win-win since it not only helps those businesses who keep our local economy strong, but also empowers our team members to give back to their community in a way that is meaningful and safe at the same time.”

As part of #LocalStrong, First Commerce team members will use the \$25 deposited into each of their accounts to purchase goods, services, gift cards or gift certificates this weekend from a locally owned business either online or over the phone to help them, their families, their neighbors, and others already feeling the impact of COVID-19. In observance of CDC guidelines for social distancing and current municipal orders, team members will not physically visit a business location to make their purchase, but are asked to do so online or over the phone with businesses such as restaurants, bakeries, cleaning services, lawn care, hardware stores, book stores, hairdressers, pet sitting services, subscriptions to support community-based publications and journalists, and many others. Team members may additionally choose to donate their purchase to an individual in need, or a local organization that serves vulnerable or at-risk populations.

First Commerce hopes that this initiative will start a movement of similar support by inspiring other organizations and people to follow suit with their own creative ways to support locally owned businesses. "Our communities are facing challenges unlike anything we have seen before," said Homison. "In line with the credit union cooperative structure, we know when we all work together, we can accomplish great things. This initiative is one small way that we can help make a difference."

In addition to the #LocalStrong initiative, last week, First Commerce quickly rolled out local relief efforts for both consumer and business members, including providing automatic one-month loan deferrals on qualified First Commerce loans, quick emergency relief loans for current First Commerce members, and waiving fees on certain transactions. The FCCU Foundation also offers free financial education to anyone through short interactive courses on a wide variety of financial topics on our website. For complete details on First Commerce's response and how we are responding to COVID-19, visit the dedicated web page at www.FirstCommerceCU.org/COVID19.

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About First Commerce Credit Union

Established nearly 80 years ago in 1940, First Commerce is an award-winning, full-service community credit union with \$620 million in assets and more than 150 team members. In 2018, First Commerce was ranked among the top 100 credit unions in deposit growth in the nation and has been the No. 1 auto lender in Tallahassee for more than 16 years running. First Commerce is passionate about empowering the local business and entrepreneurial community, including hosting the annual Power Forward Speaker Series, which brings global entrepreneurs to Tallahassee, as well as being the primary sponsor of TCC Spark, which seeks to educate and inspire local entrepreneurs.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, First Commerce is owned by the more than 55,000 business and community members it serves throughout Northwest Florida and South Georgia. First Commerce has 12 financial centers including 8 in Tallahassee, 1 in Marianna, 1 in Thomasville and 2 in Valdosta.

First Commerce offers a wide variety of products and services for consumers and businesses, along with investment services through our wholly-owned subsidiary, Six Pillars Financial Advisors; insurance services including auto, home, and life through First Commerce Insurance Agency; and financial education through the FCCU Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

First Commerce is a Florida state-chartered credit union and federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), and is an equal opportunity lender. For more information, visit FirstCommerceCU.org/Business or FirstCommerceCU.org or call (850) 488-0035 or 1(800) 533-5772.