

Case Study: CDFI Fund 30th Anniversary Report

FNBC

Ash Flat, AR



OVERVIEW

FNBC is the definition of a community bank: community is at the core of everything we do because we are #BetterTogether. Our story begins in 1912, when our bank was first chartered to meet the needs of a rural, industrious community by a group of farmers and businessmen.

Throughout our century-long history of demonstrating diligence, passion, and execution, we built an organization rooted in dependability, resourcefulness, honesty, and integrity. After more than 100 years in North Arkansas, we've demonstrated that community banking is a powerful catalyst for communities and individuals to pursue and achieve their highest aspirations.

The mission of FNBC Bancorp, and its CDFI bank subsidiary FNBC Bank, is to build profitable relationships. We provide financial products and services that foster economic development throughout each market we serve, including a focus on underserved communities. FNBC received designation as a CDFI in 2016.

THREE-YEAR IMPACT

First Chance Mortgage Lending (2020-2023):

- ▶ 65 loans totaling \$5.4 million
- Average credit score: 598
- Average income: \$36,719
- Average loan: \$84,432

Smart Start Loans: (2020-2023):

- ▶ 330 loans including 61 Smart Start Credit Builder loans
- ▶ \$611,421 in total loans
- Average credit score: 549
- ► Average loan amount: \$1,852

Today, our bank has 14 locations across the predominantly rural, economically distressed region of North Central Arkansas, Northeast Arkansas, and South-Central Missouri, with assets in excess of \$800M. FNBC provides various financial products and services, including unsecured and secured Consumer Loans, 1st and 2nd Mortgage Loans, Small Business and Agriculture Loans, and Commercial Real Estate Loans, as well as depository services for individuals and small businesses. By providing these products and services in conjunction with Business Technical Assistance, Credit Counseling and Financial Education, FNBC helps to build the local economy and bring customers into the financial mainstream.

EMERSON COMES TO ASH FLAT, AR

While the pandemic brought business to a halt and wreaked havoc on the economy throughout much of the United States in 2020, FNBC was able to bring new jobs to tiny Ash Flat, AR, with a population under 2,000.

The city was seeking to attract a new employer, Emerson, a manufacturer of Greenlee® specialty tools, to a 270,000 sq. ft. building that had been vacant for nearly 40 years. As negotiations ramped up, the small city government realized it did not have excess funds to offer economic incentives to remain competitive.

FNBC has had a long-standing banking relationship with the City of Ash Flat. The mayor and local economic development representative worked with the city to purchase a tract of land valued at \$500,000 to use as an incentive. This tract of land sat directly in front of the vacant facility and helped make the project financially feasible. The bank donated \$250,000 in funding to the city and loaned the remaining \$250,000 at 2.4% interest. Ash Flat now owns the piece of land and can use it as a future development incentive at the new Ash Flat business park.

Emerson has invested more than \$35,000,000 in building renovations and is on track to employ 286 people full-time in the manufacturing sector. The annual impact is expected to be more than \$40 million once fully staffed. The project also accounted for over 200 construction jobs in the area. Emerson is now the largest industrial employer in four counties in North Central Arkansas.

Without FNBC's investment and commitment to the community, this significant economic development project wouldn't have landed in Ash Flat, Arkansas. Today, the community has seen an increase in new residents and diversity. Housing inventory has dropped significantly, and we expect more supply partners to relocate to the area.

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