



# CEOCFO

## Interviews & News!

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### Allegiance Bank Of North America Is Focused On Providing Personalized Service To The Smaller Businesses And Individuals In Southeastern Pennsylvania And Southern New Jersey That Has Been Greatly Missed Since The Mergers Of The Big Banks



**Financial  
Commercial Bank  
(ABPA-OTC: BB)**

**Allegiance Bank of North America**

**One Belmont Avenue  
Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania 19004  
Phone: 610-949-9500**



**C. Andrew Cook  
President and CEO**

**BIO:** Graduating from Lafayette College in 1963, Mr. Cook began his career in finance at First Pennsylvania Bank, Philadelphia, Pa. Following two years as an officer on active duty from 1964-1966, he returned to the bank, serving both domestically and internationally until 1982. He then spent 3 ½ years with New Jersey National Bank as Senior Vice President and head of international, marketing and branching. In 1986 he joined Fleet Bank

(formerly Bank of New England) as Senior Vice President responsible for the national, corporate trust, correspondent banking and insurance and mutual funds departments. In 1992 Mr. Cook was asked to become President of Lehigh Valley Bank in Bethlehem, Pa. The bank was sold to Corestates Bank of Philadelphia, Pa. in 1994, at which time he began a partnership called Ardmore Banking Advisors to service the outsourcing needs of small to medium-sized banks. In 1996 Mr. Cook was asked to start American Bank of the Lehigh Valley, Allentown, Pa. Once the bank was up and running, in 1997 Mr. Cook was asked to start Allegiance Bank of North America where he remains as President/CEO today.

Mr. Cook has always served his community throughout his career. Most recently he has been treasurer and on the Executive Board of the Main line Chamber of Commerce; Chairman of the Board of Bethel Mill Prep, a start-up Christian academy; and managing the Benevolence Ministry at Gloucester County Community Church.

#### **Company Profile:**

Allegiance Bank of North America is a Pennsylvania state-chartered full-service commercial bank formed in 1999, headquartered in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania. The Bank offers a sophisticated package of services beyond traditional bank services, such as escrow account management, specialty real estate lending programs, internet banking and non-bank services including title insurance, real estate settlement services, financial planning, life and health insurance and retirement programs through its three subsidiaries, Allegiance Financial Services,

Inc., AllSearch Abstract, LLC, and Paramount Mortgage and Capital, LLC. The common stock of the Bank is traded on the OTC Bulletin Board under the symbol "ABPA."

**Interview conducted by:  
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor**

**CEOCFO:** Mr. Cook, what is your vision as CEO of Allegiance Bank of North America?

**Mr. Cook:** "The vision for Allegiance Bank of North America is to offer a much more personalized service to a lot of the smaller businesses and individual consumers in the five SE Pennsylvania counties and southern New Jersey that were perhaps left out in the cold when some of the big bank mergers took place. We feel we can better serve them because the decision-making is right here as opposed to another state or location. In essence, we can give them the 'Star Treatment'."

**CEOCFO:** What is the economy like in the area you serve?

**Mr. Cook:** "Right now, we are feeling the pinch of the housing market and the sub-prime loans like everybody else. Although I have to say that Philadelphia's prices don't vacillate as much as some other areas, such as the coastal areas of Florida and California. Therefore, we are not as heavily affected. And while the community banks don't have the sub-prime portfolio like the larger institutions, the overall economy will be somewhat adversely affected."

**CEOCFO:** Who is your typical customer?

**Mr. Cook:** "I don't know that there is such a thing. They are all individuals, and upon listening to their needs, we re-

act accordingly. Having just added four new branches, our focus is on individual consumers as well as the smaller business community we have been servicing since 1999. We have developed some consumer products that we didn't have before, both on the deposit side and on the lending side."

**CEO CFO:** Are most of the business people taking advantage of consumer products or are you getting retail customers as well?

**Mr. Cook:** "It is probably too soon for us to tell because we just recently built the branches. We went through an entire branding process for about a year to prepare us for the branch development, not only to define the 'Star Treatment', but to build branches that were unique in their ability to provide comfort and sales capability. Initial indications are that consumers and small businesses alike are thoroughly enjoying our innovative approach, and sales are certainly up."

**CEO CFO:** Why was the decision made to do the branching now?

**Mr. Cook:** "Initially we started the bank in 1999 with only one location because we thought that the younger generation was going to be strictly electronic. That has come to fruition to some degree, but we are also finding that people want to talk to other people no matter what their ages. Therefore, we decided to open locations where we could not only better serve our existing clientele, but also build a stronger client base and be a positive part of the respective communities."

**CEO CFO:** 'Expect The Star Treatment', I see that is very prominent on your website. What does that mean and what do people find at Allegiance that they are not going to find elsewhere?

**Mr. Cook:** "Everyone wants to be treated well, or like a 'Star'. But as you shop and bank, we are finding less and less personal service today. We are determined to counter that culture where you can come into our sit-down branches, have some coffee and homemade cookies, and someone actually knows your name. You build

that culture in the hiring and training process. Employees know that family comes first, and that all the rest of our employees are to be treated as customers. If you're sure the Bank will back you when there are family issues, and the employees are assisting each other, true customer service becomes an easy end product."

**CEO CFO:** Are there services that you would still like to add to the mix?

**Mr. Cook:** "We recently added deposit capture, which means companies and some individuals can electronically deposit checks at their offices or homes with a scanning machine. We will also be providing a new type of checking account, that when accompanied by other services,

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**- C. Andrew Cook**

will provide a high interest rate.

Also, we have become more electronic in our loan applications and approvals in order to provide the most efficient means to grant our customers their loan requests."

**CEO CFO:** Do you have a number of services that are non-bank?

**Mr. Cook:** "Yes we do. Through our subsidiaries and partnerships with high-quality institutions, we are able to provide all types of insurance; investment services and planning; and brokering of residential mortgages."

**CEO CFO:** Please tell us about your caregiver banking.

**Mr. Cook:** "Caregiver banking is a product we developed to assist the "caregiver" of an elderly or incapacitated person to handle the day-to-day finances of that person under his/her care. The income for the person in need of assistance is automatically deposited into our bank, and we pay the bills. At the end of each month the caregiver is sent an itemized statement. This statement can be sent to other siblings, as well, if directed by the caregiver. Most of us are very busy with our own affairs, and this simply takes away some of that burden."

**CEO CFO:** Looking to 2008; what is ahead for you?

**Mr. Cook:** "2008 is going to be an interesting year for us. I don't believe we have seen the bottom of the sub-prime issue. While that doesn't directly effect a lot of the smaller banks because they didn't invest in those kinds of securities, nor did they make a lot of those kinds of loans directly, it still affects the market place. So I don't see 2008 as a great year. We need to continue to make wise credit decisions, and develop our existing branches to their fullest potential."

**CEO CFO:** Why should investors be looking at Allegiance Bank?

**Mr. Cook:** "Not unlike most bank stocks, ours is a real bargain now because the market

has painted all banks with the same brush. However, community banks like ours are not directly affected by sub-prime loans like the larger institutions. If you couple that with excellent service, user-friendly branches and first-rate products and services, Allegiance Bank's 'Star Treatment' bodes well for our future."

**CEO CFO:** Final thoughts; what should people take away from reading this interview?

**Mr. Cook:** "If you are truly looking for a bank that treats you like a 'Star', and one that can help solve your unique financial issues with care and confidentiality, Allegiance Bank of North America is the one for you."