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**October 20, 2020**

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## **ABA Elects Georgia Banker as New ABA Chairman**

WASHINGTON — Today the American Bankers Association elected James J. Edwards, Jr., as its chairman for the 2020-2021 association year. Originally scheduled to be held in Boston, the election took place during ABA's virtual annual convention due to COVID-19. Edwards is CEO of United Bank, a \$1.7 billion community bank based in Zebulon, Ga. The bank operates 18 locations in 11 contiguous central Georgia counties, offering mortgage and wealth management lines of business in addition to traditional banking services.

"Banks are essential to the communities they serve, and I'm honored to have this opportunity to represent our industry during such a critical time," said Edwards. "Banks of all sizes continue to be a source of strength for the economy as they help their customers navigate the pandemic, and I'm looking forward to working with my peers across the country to make sure America's banks can continue to support the economy."



"Jim is a third-generation banker who has shown an unwavering commitment to our industry and tremendous leadership in advocating for America's banks," said Rob Nichols, ABA president and CEO. "His experience leading during times of crisis, passion for developing the next generation of bankers and depth of industry knowledge will be an asset in this new and critically important role."

Edwards has been actively involved in the banking industry at both the state and national level over the last 25 years. In addition to serving as ABA chairman, he currently is vice chairman of The American Bankers Mutual Insurance Company and is a member of the FDIC Community Bank Advisory Committee. Edwards previously chaired ABA's Community Bankers Council in 2016. He was chairman

of the Georgia Bankers Association in 2013 and chaired its Leadership Section in 2000.

Edwards is committed to helping build the communities United Bank serves. He is vice chairman of Upson Regional Medical Center and is a member of Emory University's Board of Visitors. He is a past chairman of the Gordon State College Foundation, the Thomaston/Upson Chamber of Commerce and the Thomaston/Upson Development Authority.

Edwards received a bachelor's degree from Emory University, an MBA from the University of Virginia and is a graduate of ABA's Stonier Graduate School of Banking. He and his wife, Dr. Laura Edwards, have three grown children and live in Forsyth, Georgia.

***About the American Bankers Association***

*The American Bankers Association is the voice of the nation's \$21.1 trillion banking industry, which is composed of small, regional and large banks that together employ more than 2 million people, safeguard \$17 trillion in deposits and extend nearly \$11 trillion in loans.*

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