

Citizens National Bank Presents Over \$71,000 in Grant Money to Local Non-Profits

Citizens National Bank presented \$71,100 in grant distributions to area non-profit organizations in a morning press conference which was held at its Downtown Banking Centre in Meridian on Thursday, March 22, 2018. Of this amount, a total of \$68,600 in donations was made through the W. R. Baird Charitable Trust, which is managed by Citizens National Bank's Wealth Management Division. An additional \$2,500 grant was awarded to The Montgomery Institute on behalf of the Bank.

The W. R. Baird Charitable Trust was established in 1978 by William Robert Baird with less than \$200,000 and is now worth over \$5.5 million. In his Last Will and Testament, Baird requested that the income from his charitable trust account be used to support persons, institutions, and organizations which serve the poor people of Mississippi and Louisiana. The following organizations received grants today from the Baird Trust: Care Lodge, Multi-County Community Service Agency, L.O.V.E.'s Kitchen, Lauderdale County Habitat for Humanity, Mississippi Special Olympics, Greater New Orleans Foundation, Boy Scouts of America (Disadvantaged Campers Fund), Catholic Charities, the American Red Cross Southeast Chapter, The Salvation Army of Meridian, The Boys and Girls Club of East Mississippi,

Hope Village for Children, The Free Clinic of Meridian, New Destiny Daycare & Learning Academy and Meridian Freedom Project. Baird was born in 1902 in Jackson, Louisiana, and his early career included a position as a traveling salesman for Congoleum Rug Company of New Orleans. In 1930, he became a salesman for New Orleans Manufacturing Company, making his headquarters in Meridian, where he married Elizabeth Gulley Hall in 1938. While serving as Vice President for the company, Baird and his wife moved several times around Louisiana and Mississippi. The couple moved back to Meridian in 1969, when their home in Pass Christian was destroyed by Hurricane Camille. The Baird Charitable Trust committee makes semi-annual distributions, and has made a total of \$195,999 in distributions in 2017 and 2018. Since 1981, over \$4.4 million in distributions have been made.

The \$2,500 donation to The Montgomery Institute was the second installment of a \$12,500 grant that the Bank has pledged to the organization over a 5-year period, from 2017 through 2022. The Bank has designated these funds to support job training programs, employment, and/or entrepreneurship related activities for the benefit of un-employed and/or under employed individuals who reside in the East Mississippi area. The grant will also support community planning and development in the same area. The Montgomery Institute has undertaken initiatives since its inception in 2001, in leadership development, rural place building, educational enhancement, workforce development, research and information dissemination, regional cooperation, and innovation.

Citizens National Bank is an independent, Mississippi-owned community bank, which has 26 bank locations in the following Mississippi communities: Meridian, Ridgeland, Madison, Flowood, Hattiesburg, Laurel, Waynesboro, Columbus, Macon, Kosciusko, Carthage, Philadelphia, Quitman, Southaven, and Olive Branch. The Bank has assets in excess of \$1.3 billion and manages over \$1 billion in its Wealth Management Division, which is committed to assisting clients with the accumulation, preservation, and transfer of wealth.