

Pacific Premier Becomes King of OC-Based Banks

Acquisition Helps Pass Banc of California

By PETER J. BRENNAN

A new leader tops the Business Journal's annual ranking of the biggest banks with headquarters in Orange County.

Pacific Premier Bancorp (Nasdaq: PPBI) took the top spot by boosting its assets 44% to \$11.8 billion for the 12 months ended June 30.

The new title is the culmination of a 19-year run for Chief Executive **Steve Gardner**, who took over the bank in 2000 when it was near bankruptcy and based in Riverside.

In 2010, the bank reported \$826.8 million in assets. Since then, its growth has been aided by organic growth and the acquisitions of 10 banks, the biggest of which was Grandpoint Capital that added another \$3.6 billion in assets, helping it grab this year's title.

"Our exceptional employees are committed to delivering the highest level of service and professionalism in the industry, and because of this our clients regularly refer fellow business owners and consumers to the bank," Gardner told the Business Journal.

"As we have grown, word has spread that Pacific Premier is the bank of choice for businesses," he said, adding, "Orange County is a dynamic marketplace. We expect to grow throughout the area over the coming years."

Santa Ana's **Banc of California** fell to No. 2 at \$9.4 billion in assets as Chief Executive **Jared Wolff** purposely shed its less profitable areas (see separate story, page 1).

The Business Journal's annual list of banks highlights 18 banks whose assets climbed to \$42.3 billion for the 12 months ended June 30, a 12% jump from the same period a year earlier.

The list also reflects an industry trend of fewer local banks; a decade ago, 25 banks made the Business Journal's list. Only seven on that list appear on this year's list.

One thing is for sure—the biggest are growing bigger. The six largest banks on this year's list all top the assets of 2009's largest, Costa Mesa's **Pacific Mercantile Bank**, which in that year had \$1.1 billion in assets. Pacific Mercantile is now No. 5, with \$1.4 billion in assets, a 4.5% climb from a year ago.

The local banks slightly increased their OC employee count by 1% to 2,327. The largest jump came at Irvine-based **Commercial Bank of California**, where its employee count climbed 60% to 101. The employee count was temporarily low last year when it was undergoing a transition in leadership.

Ash Patel, who took the CEO position in 2013, has grown Commercial Bank of California's assets from \$200 million when he took over in 2013 to \$977.8 million as of June 30; the last annual figure was an 8.3% increase from the prior year.

Other Notable Banking News

Irvine's **Nano Banc** was the biggest grower; it more than tripled its assets to \$737.1 million. "Nano Banc was the fastest organic growing bank in the country last year," said a bank spokeswoman.

The bank's website said it doesn't invest in "the more common brick and mortar approach" and that its technology permits it to deliver products "without the steep price tag."

Chief Executive **Mark Rebal** and President **Mark Troncale** founded the bank last year, raising \$71.7 million in equity capital to acquire commercial banks in Southern California.

Rebal was co-founder of California Republic Bank, where Troncale worked as a senior vice president in charge of treasury and cash management.

First Foundation Inc. (Nasdaq: FFWM) ranked No. 4 with \$6.3 billion in assets, a 5.1% rise from the year prior. Chief Executive **Scott Kavanaugh** said

the increase would have been much higher except that it sold off about \$1.1 billion in assets.

"We would've grown substantially more if we had not done two substantial securitizations," he said.

No. 12 **Partners Bank of California**, based in Mission Viejo, hired **Chris Walsh**, a banker well known in Orange County business circles, as chief executive about 15 months ago.

Walsh attributed the growth to opening an office in Beverly Hills and hiring two seasoned bankers.

The bank, which specializes in doctors and healthcare professionals, is aiming for \$360 million in assets in 2020 and more than \$400 million in 2021. It may also open a new office. The bank does a lot of business with **Mission Hospital** and wants to expand to professionals in **Hoag** and **Saddleback**.

"We want to grow the business bank with relatively safe lending," said Walsh, who was previously the top local official for **Blue Gate Bank**, which was sold a year ago.

Another fast grower was Santa Ana-based **Infinity Bank**, which climbed 145% to \$106.1 million. It opened early last year with **Bala Balkrishna**, who was previously chief executive of Commercial Bank of California. He is also on the bank's board along with **Glenn Stearns**, founder of **Stearns Lending LLC**; and **Cary Bren**, chief executive of **California Pacific Homes**.



Nano Banc CEO Rebal

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STEVEN R. GARDNER
Chairman and CEO
Pacific Premier Bank



ASH PATEL
CEO and President
Commercial Bank of California



CESAR ROSAS
Executive VP
California Business Bank



PAUL W. TAYLOR
CEO and President
Opus Bank



IVO A. TJAN
Chairman, CEO and President
CommerceWest Bank



MARK TRONCALE
President
Nano Banc

THE LIST

OC-BASED COMMERCIAL BANKS

► NEXT WEEK'S LIST *Shopping Centers*

RANKED BY ASSETS

Rank	Bank	Assets as of June 30, 2019	Return on assets (%) as of June 30, 2019	Core capital ratio (%) as of June 30, 2019	Loans/deposits (%) as of June 30, 2019	Net income (loss) for six months ended: June 30, 2019 - June 30, 2018	OC branches	Parent company	Top local official(s)
Prev. Rank	Address	yearly % change					OC employees	Headquarters	Title
Rank	Company logo						yearly % change		Phone/fax
1	Pacific Premier Bank 17901 Von Karman Ave., Ste. 1200 Irvine 92614-5248 Website: ppbi.com	\$11.8 billion 44.4%	1.42%	11.66%	97.75%	\$82.3 million \$59.5 million	5 385 -2.8%	Pacific Premier Bancorp Inc. Irvine	Steven R. Gardner chairman/CEO (949) 864-8000
(2)									
2	Banc of California Inc. 3 MacArthur Place Santa Ana 92707-6067 Website: bancocal.com	\$9.4 billion -9.1%	0.57%	10.8%	114.24%	\$28.4 million \$33.9 million	10 500 0%	Banc of California Inc. Santa Ana	Jared Wolff/Hamid Hussain/Jay Sanders/John Sotoodeh CEO, president/president, real estate and commercial banking/ president, private and specialty banking/president, community and business banking (714) 850-6440/(714) 800-1950
(1)									
3	Opus Bank 19900 MacArthur Blvd., 12th floor Irvine 92612-8402 Website: opusbank.com Email: kellis@opusbank.com	\$7.9 billion 9.2%	0.52%	9.3%	93.24%	\$19.5 million \$28.4 million	6 300 -16.4%	Opus Bank Irvine	Paul W. Taylor CEO/president (949) 250-9800
(3)									
4	First Foundation Inc. 18101 Von Karman Ave., Ste. 700 Irvine 92612-0145 Website: firstfoundationinc.com	\$6.3 billion 5.1%	0.82%	8.17%	109.97%	\$24.8 million \$15.5 million	3 298 21.6%	First Foundation Inc. Irvine	Scott F. Kavanaugh CEO (949) 202-4100
(4)									
5	Pacific Mercantile Bank 949 South Coast Drive, Ste. 300 Costa Mesa 92626-7733 Website: pmbank.com Email: info@pmbank.com	\$1.4 billion 4.5%	0.64%	10.96%	89.3%	\$4.4 million \$18.3 million	4 149 6.4%	Pacific Mercantile Bancorp Costa Mesa	Brad R. Dinsmore CEO/president (714) 438-2500/(714) 438-1059
(5)									
6	Sunwest Bank 2050 Main St., Ste. 300 Irvine 92614-8279 Website: sunwestbank.com Email: info@sunwestbank.com	\$1.3 billion 1.6%	1.62%	12.59%	109.01%	\$10.9 million \$9.9 million	3 130 0%	H Bancorp LLC Irvine	Eric Hovde/Carson Lappetito/ Kent Smith chairman, CEO/president/CFO, executive VP (714) 730-4444/(714) 832-0258
(6)									
7	Commercial Bank of California 19752 MacArthur Blvd., Ste. 100 Irvine 92612-2409 Website: cbcal.com Email: apatel@cbcal.com	\$977.8 million 8.3%	0.66%	9.65%	83.05%	\$3.2 million \$3.9 million	3 101 60.3%	CBC Bancorp Irvine	Ash Patel CEO/president (714) 431-7000/(714) 825-0982
(7)									
8	Nano Banc 7700 Irvine Center Drive, Ste. 700 Irvine 92618-3042 Website: nanobanc.com	\$737.1 million 239.3%	-0.06%	10.98%	85.77%	(\$183,000) (\$2.2 million)	1 49 36.1%	Nano Financial Holdings Inc. Irvine	Mark Troncale president (844) 626-0262
(NR)									
9	CommerceWest Bank 2111 Business Center Drive Irvine 92612-1019 Website: cwbk.com Email: itjan@cwbk.com	\$585.4 million 6.5%	1.25%	10.14%	79.77%	\$4.1 million \$2.7 million	1 70 -12.5%	CommerceWest Bank Irvine	Ivo A. Tjan chairman/CEO/president (949) 251-6959/(949) 251-6957
(8)									
10	Pacific Enterprise Bank 17748 Sky Park Circle, Ste. 100 Irvine 92614-4497 Website: pacificenterprisebank.com Email: bhalle@pacificenterprisebank.com	\$494.4 million -2.8%	0.81%	10.54%	89.18%	\$2 million \$2.1 million	1 110 -0.9%	Pacific Enterprise Bancorp Irvine	Brian Halle CEO/president (949) 623-7600/(949) 623-7601
(9)									
11	U.S. Metro Bank 9866 Garden Grove Blvd. Garden Grove 92844-1643 Website: usmetrobank.com Email: ralphwiita@usmetrobank.com	\$473.1 million 36.2%	0.94%	11.64%	78.15%	\$2.1 million \$2.1 million	3 56 7.7%	U.S. Metro Bank Garden Grove	Dong Il Kim CEO/president (714) 620-8888/(714) 620-8889
(10)									
12	Partners Bank of California 27201 Puerta Real, Ste. 160 Mission Viejo 92691-8556 Website: pbofca.com Email: information@pbofca.com	\$290.9 million 36%	0.58%	12.77%	109.52%	\$787,000 \$872,000	2 41 2.5%	Partners Bank of California Mission Viejo	Chris Walsh CEO/president (949) 732-4000/(949) 348-0180
(13)									
13	CalWest Bank 400 Spectrum Center Drive, Ste. 100 Irvine 92618-4936 Website: calwestbancorp.com Email: contact@calwestbancorp.com	\$234.4 million 32.5%	0.7%	9.33%	79.13%	\$746,000 \$1 million	3 41 13.9%	CalWest Bancorp Irvine	Glenn Gray/Najam Saiduddin/ Sanjaya Arangalla CEO, president/CFO/chief credit officer (949) 766-3000/(949) 766-3098
(14)									

Sources: Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. and the banks Abbreviations: NR: not ranked
Note: To the best of our knowledge, this information is accurate as of press time. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of the list, omissions and typographical errors sometimes occur. Unless otherwise noted, the information on this

list was provided by the companies themselves. List may not be reprinted without permission of the editor. Photos show the first top official listed.

Researched by Meghan Kilewer

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OC-BASED COMMERCIAL BANKS

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RANKED BY ASSETS

Rank	Bank Prev. Rank	Address	Company logo	Assets as of June 30, 2019 •yearly % change	Return on assets (%) as of June 30, 2019	Core capital ratio (%) as of June 30, 2019	Loans/ deposits (%) as of June 30, 2019	Net income (loss) for six months ended: -June 30, 2019 -June 30, 2018	OC branches OC employees •yearly % change	Parent company Headquarters	Top local official(s) •Title •Phone/fax	
14 (12)	California First National Bank	4 Executive Circle, Ste. 120 Irvine 92614-6728 Website: calfirst.com Email: bankinfo@calfirst.com		\$165.5 million -44.6%	2.19%	38.34%	127.58%	\$2.3 million \$5 million	1 24 -52%	California First National Bancorp Irvine	Patrick E. Paddon/Glen T. Tsuma/Leslie Jewett CEO/vice chairman/CFO (949) 255-0500/(949) 255-5262	
15 (17)	Infinity Bank	6 Hutton Centre Drive, Ste. 100 Santa Ana 92707-8729 Website: goinfinitybank.com Email: info@goinfinitybank.com		\$106.1 million 145.3%	-2.83%	28.4%	41.44%	(\$1.2 million) (\$1.3 million)	1 23 21.1%	Infinity Bank Santa Ana	Bala Balkrishna/Victor Guerrero/ Ken Coolidge CEO, president/COO, CFO/chief credit officer (657) 223-1000/(714) 619-7456	
16 (15)	California Business Bank	3200 El Camino Real, Ste. 220 Irvine 92602-1381 Website: californiabusinessbank.com		\$87.3 million -13.5%	-1.39%	15.07%	119.59%	(\$611,000) (\$811,000)	1 15 -28.6%	California Business Bank Irvine	Cesar Rosas executive VP (714) 389-9970/(714) 619-8864	
17 (16)	Tustin Community Bank	13891 Newport Ave., Ste. 100 Tustin 92780-7801 Website: tustincmtybank.com Email: genemicco@tustincmtybank.com		\$76.1 million -1.7%	0.79%	14.31%	89.62%	\$308,000 \$440,000	1 24 -4%	Saddleback Bancorp Tustin	Gene Micco CEO/president (714) 730-5662/(714) 731-2794	
18 (NR)	California International Bank N.A.	15606 Brookhurst St., Ste. C-D Westminster 92683-7581 Website: calibankna.com Email: thanh.pham@calibankna.com		\$46.1 million -11.6%	-2.94%	29.61%	122.52%	(\$673,000) (\$1.1 million)	1 11 37.5%	California International Bank N.A. Westminster ⁽¹⁾	John G. Briner CEO/president (714) 338-8700/(714) 338-8730	

Sources: Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. and the banks Abbreviations: NR: not ranked

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top official listed.

⁽¹⁾ California International Bank relocated its headquarters back to Westminster after closing its Rosemead branch