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First Southwest Community Fund hires Executive Director

First Southwest Community Fund hires inaugural Executive Director to continue, scale and build programs in rural Colorado

ALAMOSA, COLO. (September 10th, 2019) — First Southwest Community Fund (FSWCF) recently hired an inaugural Executive Director, Cass Walker Harvey, with the goal of scaling the work FSWCF is doing throughout rural Colorado and into New Mexico.

Cass Walker Harvey has spent the past decade building inclusive innovation ecosystems in the USA, Latin America and the UK. Most recently, Cass Walker Harvey led the launch of the Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale as Managing Director where she focused on strategy and programming for entrepreneurship and inclusive innovation at Yale, and advised start-ups in the areas of environment, sustainability, health, education, technology and social justice. She also sat on Senator Chris Murphy’s Innovation Council, along with multiple other non-profit boards. Prior to her time at Yale, Cass Walker Harvey founded two nonprofits in the international education and women’s rights space.

“I’m incredibly excited to be joining the team at FSWCF. FSWCF along with First Southwest Bank (FSWB) are doing very innovative work enabling access to capital for rural entrepreneurs. The FSWCF board, along with the FSWB team have done an amazing job over the past five years, and I’m looking forward to continuing to support their efforts and also introduce some new programs”, says Cass Walker Harvey, Executive Director. “I’m enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring my background building inclusive innovation ecosystems, women’s rights, social justice and non-profit management to help scale FSWCF’s efforts.”

“We are thrilled to bring Cass on as Executive Director at FSWCF” says Kent Curtis, First Southwest Community Fund President. “Her unique background and passion for supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses will enable us to take our work to the next level.”

FSWCF’s mission is to support the dedicated entrepreneurial spirit of rural Colorado, by investing in the people, culture, and ideas that fuel innovation and financial knowledge in our communities. FSWCF is actively expanding its partnerships to build an ecosystem of support for rural entrepreneurs, for example their new partnership with Telluride Foundation to launch the Telluride Regional Loan Fund (a \$2 Million working capital loan fund for rural startups). For more information on FSWCF work, or to get in touch with Cass Walker Harvey please reach out to her at cass.walker@fswcf.org or go to the FSWCF website www.fswcf.org.

About First Southwest Community Fund

First Southwest Community Fund (FSWCF), a 501c3, supports the dedicated entrepreneurial spirit of rural Colorado, by investing in the people, culture, and ideas that fuel innovation and financial knowledge in our communities. FSWCF’s primary mission is to support tangible economic opportunities throughout rural Colorado, with an emphasis on areas of greatest need. FSWCF makes much needed non-traditional capital (loans) available to businesses that may not yet be bankable, which in turn creates, retains and grows jobs. FSWCF is supported by First Southwest Bank, a designated Community Development Financial Institution. Please find more information about First Southwest Community Fund at fswcf.org.



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About First Southwest Bank

Serving the San Luis Valley and rural Colorado for more than 100 years, First Southwest Bank offers personal and business banking at their seven branches, with an emphasis on businesses supporting rural communities. First Southwest Bank and their employees actively live-in and give back to our communities, volunteering with more than 40 local organizations, and donating to 115. As a CDFI bank, First Southwest Bank is focused on cultivating valuable relationships, investing in economic and social doers, and fostering a well-lived rural culture. More information about First Southwest Bank is available at fswb.com. Member FDIC, Equal Housing Lender

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