

Two new employees join GSB

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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A financial officer and loan officer are the newest employees at Gothenburg State Bank.

Gothenburg native Brandon Kauffman joined the business in July and Joe Libal of Cozad at the end of February.

As financial officer, Kauffman oversees the operations of Gothenburg State Bank.

Kauffman said he and his family decided to return to his hometown because of the experiences he had growing up in Gothenburg and its community values.

Other reasons are the excellent school system, hospital and community support, said the 1995 Gothenburg High School graduate, and the fact the family would be closer to family.

His parents, Jan Kauffman and Ron Kauffman, live in Gothenburg and his wife's parents reside in Denver.

Kauffman has an undergraduate degree in business and a master's degree in business administration, with an emphasis in accounting, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

He worked for the Deloitte & Touche accounting firm in Lincoln. In Denver, CO, Kauffman was a senior financial analyst for Nestle, a financial controller for Evolution Digital and general manager of Team K Services.

His last job was as financial manager for EZCORP in Austin, TX.

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The biggest challenge so far, Kauffman said, is the adjustment to a different industry.

“In the past, I worked in finances but not in a bank,” he said. “This is a rare opportunity to learn about the industry from the past president of the American Banking Association (bank president Matt Williams) who is known throughout the country as a leader in the banking industry.

“I’m also blessed to be surrounded by an incredibly talented team.”

Kauffman is married to Katie Beth Kauffman, a Seattle, WA, native he met in Denver. She is a marketing director for Evolution Digital, a Denver technology company and works remotely out of their home.

The couple has three children: Carter, 7; Ethan, 4; and Christian, 3 months.

Kauffman likes to golf, mountain bike, play basketball and spend time with his family.

Libal said he joined Gothenburg State because it’s a great, locally owned bank.

Another factor is because his wife, Gothenburg native Alexa (Ostergard) Libal, wanted to move back to her hometown.

Alexa teaches fifth and sixth grades at the local Sterling Academy school.

In his bank position, Joe makes ag, commercial and personal loans.

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“Learning a new system and new clientele has been the biggest challenge,” he said.

The Libals lived in Cozad and recently moved to Gothenburg.

Joe, a Cozad High School graduate who grew up on a farm north of Darr, graduated from UNL in 2012 with bachelor’s degrees in finance and agribusiness.

He then worked for Homestead Bank in Lexington for two years.

During his leisure time, Joe likes to travel, hunt, fish and do anything outdoors. He’s also involved in the Nebraska Army National Guard.

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