



# Century Savings Bank: 160 Years of Community-Focused Banking

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Every bank seeks to “crack the code” of success. Leadership looks for magic formulas, cutting-edge strategies, or some other secret sauce that guarantees results. But at Century Savings Bank, Vineland, N.J., they’ve figured out the key to their version of what A-level results look like. And it’s not flashy. It’s not trendy. It’s simple—but not easy. It starts with knowing who you are and staying true to that insight, day after day, year after year.

For 160 years, [Century Savings Bank](#) has quietly built a reputation that others are still chasing. While plenty of banks have raced to be bigger, better, and faster, Century has stayed steady. Over time their various leaders built success organically, without shortcuts. For them, “winning” means being the rock. It signifies embodying something their employees, customers, and community can count on—yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

## The Simple Formula for Enduring Success in Banking

The formula for that kind of result is actually less complicated than some might think:

Bank leaders instill values (either actively or passively) in colleagues. As these values continue to be ingrained into the organization, they become standards for **hiring**. As new hires succeed, their actions gel into a bank **culture**. That culture defines future **behaviors**, which impact **results**. Enough admirable results burnish a bank's overall **reputation**. A stellar reputation leads to long-term **success**.

Perhaps the most intriguing element of the way these bankers go about their day-to-day is that it evolved organically. No corporate culture consultant came in to suggest formalized behavioral interview questions. No inspirational posters are needed in the lunchroom, listing company values to define their who, how, and why.

The professionals at Century Savings Bank just *are*. And from that innate simplicity has sprung their longevity.

## Bank Leadership That Shapes Generations



*Past Chairman, J. Alan Woodruff*

The first 100-plus years of Century's history laid the foundation for everything that followed – a steady, reliable approach that kept the bank financially strong through numerous economic cycles, but out of the public eye.

Century's story over its most recent 50 years, however, was shaped by an industry visionary: Alan Woodruff. This highly respected businessman and community champion joined the board in 1971. According to current Chairman Dave Hemple, who started at Century as a teller in 1983, Woodruff led by example. "He was the kind of guy who never missed a Rotary meeting in 55 years," Hemple says. "He was a true gentleman."

When Hemple became CEO in 2005, Woodruff challenged him to change the bank's trajectory. "We've been the best-kept secret in Cumberland County," Woodruff told him. "Now it's time to let people know we're here—by giving back."

Until then, Century had taken a quiet, conservative approach to being a good neighbor. But Woodruff believed it was time to ramp that up and become a visible force in the community. The rest of the bank's leadership agreed.

That shift didn't just create goodwill. It sparked something bigger. "We started giving back in ways we never had," Hemple recalls. "And suddenly deposits were increasing. We weren't trying to buy business—but people noticed. It's unbelievable what happens when you give."

What started as an effort to do more for the community evolved into something much bigger. "I'd show up at board meetings saying, 'We grew deposits by \$4 million this month.' The next month it was \$8 million. After that, another \$6 million." In just a few years, Century doubled its deposits—from \$200 million to \$400 million. "At one point," Hemple laughs, "we were trying to figure out how to slow it down. We couldn't sustain that pace of growth."

Carl Kirstein, who succeeded Woodruff as Chairman in 2018, continued that legacy. Kirstein had worked for Woodruff at his energy company and was mentored into a leadership position on the board. "Carl was cut from the same cloth," Hemple says. "He believed in giving back and leading with humility."



*Past Chairman Carl Kirstein*



*Past Chairman Carl Kirstein (Left), and Current Chairman, Dave Hemple (Right)*

Kirstein's final leadership act was stepping down from the board earlier than he had to—creating space for new talent to rise. "It wasn't in his own financial best interest," Hemple says, "but he thought it was the right thing for the future of the bank." That selfless move paved the way for Hemple to retire as CEO and move into the board chair role and for a new generation of leaders to come to the fore.

# The “Right Fit”: Century’s Approach to Hiring and Employee Retention

At Century Savings Bank, culture and values aren’t just a set of words inscribed on the first page of the employee handbook. It’s something that shows up in how leaders hire, who they promote, and how they treat people. Finding the right fit has always been part of their long game. And it’s a game they play well.

“We hire for character,” says Hemple. “We try to be good judges of people. We’ve had a wonderful run of long-time employees here.”

He’s not exaggerating. Throughout his tenure, Century has seen employee after employee stay for 20, 30, even 40 years. Why? Because they belong there. They believe in what Century stands for, and in return, Century believes in them.

“There are certain types of people who are intrinsically motivated, who want to do a great job, and who want to make others happy,” Hemple explains. “And there are others who just want a paycheck. We try to distinguish between the two and aim to hire the ones who are here to make a difference.”

It’s a culture that breeds deep relationships—among employees and with customers. “We’ve always had a tight-knit environment at this company,” Hemple says. “Even though people work in separate locations, there’s a connection. We look out for each other.”

## Branch Manager Sandy Quinn: Reflecting on the Bank’s Caring Environment

Sandy Quinn knows that firsthand. She’s been with Century for over 30 years, starting as a teller and working her way up to branch manager. She describes the bank as her “second family.”

When tragedy struck—when she lost her husband seven years ago—that family showed up. “The outpouring of support was beyond anything I ever expected,” Quinn recalls. “But it was exactly what I needed. HR was at my door, helping with paperwork, telling me not to worry about anything. They made sure I was taken care of. My family will never forget that.”

But Quinn is quick to point out that her story isn’t unique. “This is how we treat everyone here,” she says. “Not just each other, but our customers, too. When they hurt, we hurt. When they share their joy with us, it’s our joy. It’s more personal. It’s a connection most banks will never have.”

# CSR Kelly Pyle: Human Touch Through Bank Customer Interactions

Kelly Pyle, a Customer Service Representative with 36 years under her belt, tells a story that speaks volumes about Century's culture. She's known many of her customers for decades, sharing in their lives—the good times and the hard ones.

"There was a woman whose husband had cancer," Pyle recalls. "One day, I saw her at the dollar store. She was getting a few things, but at the cash register, she found out she happened not to have enough money for her purchases. So, I paid for it. It was \$30. I never told anyone about it.

"But to this day, whenever she calls the bank, before she hangs up, she reminds me. She says, 'I'll never forget what you did for me.' And that was years ago."

This isn't a strategy or a policy. It's not something Century teaches in its formal training. It's just who the employees are. It's an example of the learned behaviors that define the Century Bank culture, reinforced by leaders who live the same values.

As Hemple puts it, "If you're going to work [here], you have to want to make people feel good. That's the difference."

And it's a difference that keeps Century's culture strong, generation after generation.

## Why Businesses Choose Century Savings Bank

Rustin "Rusty" Cassway owns [Victory Truck Body, Inc.](#), a Glassboro, N.J., manufacturer of commercial truck bodies and trailers. He's worked with numerous banks over the years—but Century stands apart.

"They've got the resources to fund a major project," Cassway says, "but I can still sit down with the president at a diner and talk through things. They're solid people."

For Cassway, Century's strength is how deeply they care about knowing their customers. "It's not like a Facebook Marketplace deal where you're done and never hear from them again," he laughs. "They earn your business, and when they get it, they're proud of it. It's a win for them."

Even before Victory Truck Body, Inc., established a formal Century Savings Bank relationship, the bank engaged with Cassway. "They were always consultative," he notes. "Even when they weren't getting my business, they wanted what was best for me."



And once they won his business? “They made it easy,” he says. “Doing business with them isn’t complicated.”

## The “160 Days of Giving” and Century’s Community Support



*Century Savings Bank’s Women’s Build team*

The ongoing encouragement from Century Bank board member Alan Woodruff to give back still shapes the organization’s philosophy today. Senior Vice President/Director of Marketing and Retail Banking, Debbie Holman is proof of that. She joined the bank 17 years ago from a marketing firm.

Holman oversees community engagement programs like “160 Days of Giving,” a community initiative timed to celebrate the bank’s anniversary. Under these programs, the bank makes meaningful, local improvements—like building an [archway at Bridgeton’s city park](#)—and continues to support causes that serve the neighborhoods in which it does business, like [Habitat For Humanity](#).

One of Century’s most significant commitments is to the [School Counts! program](#). Over the 25 years of its existence, the bank has contributed more than \$200,000 in scholarships for Cumberland County high school students. It’s a program that provides two years’ tuition at [Rowan College of South Jersey](#), giving students an educational leg up they might not have gotten otherwise.

“It’s like a farm league for employers,” says [Kim Ayres](#) of the [Cumberland County Improvement Authority](#). “It’s growing the future workforce.”

Chelsea Santiago is a graduate of the program. She’s now a counseling social worker at [Millville High School](#). “Without School Counts!, I’m not sure where I’d be,” she says. “Now I get to help students get a leg up, just like I did.”

# Century's Future: Steady Hands, Clear Vision

With [Dave Hanrahan](#), succeeding Dave Hemple as CEO, [Joe Rehm](#) as [Chief Lending Officer](#), and both being board members, Century's next chapter is being well stewarded. Handpicked by Hemple, both leaders bring a deep respect for the bank's values.



"Sexy growth isn't why we're here," Hanrahan says. "We're here to be good to our customers, responsive to the community, and kind to employees."

Hanrahan rejects the idea that banks need to grow endlessly to stay relevant. "That's an investment banker's myth," he says. "We've got the economies of scale we need. Our size and nimbleness, along with the benefits from our mutual structure, are our biggest strengths."

*Dave Hanrahan, CEO (left) and Dave Hemple, Chairman (right)*

That spryness proved to be a crucial edge during the PPP lending rush. "Community banks across the U.S., like Century, got PPP done for their customers, while the big banks couldn't get out of their own way," Hanrahan says.

That innovative stance has continued in the post-pandemic economy. Hanrahan notes that Century has invested in forward-thinking ventures that include:

- Solar tax credit investments that bring green energy, at a discount, to lower-income households. "There is no other community bank in our market doing that," Hanrahan says. "We figured it out because we like to do cool, different things if we think it'll be impactful and if it's in our circle of competency."
- A low-income housing tax credit investment in the works at a Jersey Shore community. Hanrahan notes: "It's unusual for a bank our size to be investing in a low-income housing tax credit. But it's a solid project, it'll be good for the community, and we've worked hard to help make it happen."

Rehm emphasizes the value of the bank's mutual structure. "It's a competitive advantage," he says. "We don't have shareholders breathing down our necks. We can honestly tell customers and employees to come to a place that wants to remain a locally controlled mutual bank. We can focus on quality over quantity."

When Hemple first approached Hanrahan and Rehm about joining Century's leadership team, there was one non-negotiable. "Don't come here if you're thinking about converting this bank to a stock bank," Hemple told them.

Their answer? "That's music to our ears," said Rehm.

## Century Savings Bank's Thoughtful Approach to Innovation

Century doesn't jump on every trend. Its business model doesn't chase the latest technology just to keep up appearances. "I'd call us tech-relevant," describes Hanrahan, "but not bleeding-edge. We're not your bank for bitcoin, but we've got a solid tech suite that meets our customers' needs."

What sets Century apart is its human touch. "Our customers appreciate that we still pick up the phone," Rehm adds. "They know they'll talk to someone who cares and can actually help."

Sandy Quinn and Kelly Pyle say it best: "When's the last time an app went to a customer's funeral?" Quinn asks. "Or noticed a customer who's obviously struggling over a personal matter and gave them a hug?" Pyle adds.

For Century, it's about thoughtful change, redirecting strategically when it makes sense for the long-term health of the bank and the people it serves. "We're not about change for the sake of change," says Rehm. "We make decisions based on what's right for the bank, our employees, and our customers, not for headlines or trends."



*Dave Hanrahan, CEO (Right), and Joe Rehm, Chief Lending Officer (Left)*

That deliberate approach is why Century has earned Bauer Financial's highest Five-Star Rating for the better part of the past 30 years. That's a distinction less than seven percent of U.S. banks can claim. And that same approach recently earned Century a spot on *Newsweek's* 2025 list of America's Best Regional Banks.

"It's a reflection of consistency," Hanrahan says. "You don't get those ratings without a long-term view."

Steady. Predictable in all the right ways. And still flexible enough to respond when their community needs them most. These are the hallmarks of Century Savings Bank.



# 160 Years Strong—And Still True to Themselves

After 160 years, this Vineland, N.J., financial institution has proven that success doesn't come from chasing trends or following the crowd. It comes from knowing who its commercial and consumer customers are—and executing on that insight, day after day. It's embodied by staying steady when others rush ahead. It's exercised by remaining dependable when others chase the next big thing.

At Century, success is not about how big they can become, and leadership isn't just about who sits at the table—it's about how they lead: with values that run deep, and a culture driven by caring employees who reinforce them every single day. It's those values that shape the way the team shows up—for each other, for their customers, and for the community. And it's those everyday actions, repeated over time, that deliver the kind of results that legacies are built on.



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