



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Merchants Bank Branch Presidents Recognized with National Awards**

**SOUTH BURLINGTON, VT**—Thomas S. Leavitt, Executive Vice President of Merchants Bank announced that Business Custom Capital's *National Achievement Awards* for 2006 have been awarded to George Araskiewicz, Branch President for the Manchester office and Darlene Cooper, Branch President for the St. Albans office.

Both Araskiewicz and Cooper earned a *National Achievement Award for National Top Ten Banker* and were acknowledged for their efforts in the small business market in 2006. In 2006, the Business Custom Capital Unsecured Business Credit Solutions program serviced small businesses in more than 19 states in two countries by offering unsecured credit products through 39 banks. Ten national awards are given in the *National Top Ten Bankers* categories for the nation's top ten bankers with the most account applications submitted, accounts opened and account commitments.

"Business Custom Capital is committed to growing and developing small business markets. Our partnership with Merchants Bank has been favorable for both institutions and to small business owners in the communities we serve together," commented Kent K. Mannina, Vice President and National Sales Manager for Business Custom Capital.



**Darlene Cooper**



**George Araskiewicz**

The continuing mission of Merchants Bank is to provide Vermonters with a state-wide community bank that blends a strong technology platform with a genuine appreciation for local markets. It fulfills this

commitment through a branch-based system that includes 36 community bank offices and 43 ATMs throughout Vermont, Personal Bankers dedicated to top-quality customer service, and streamlined products: FreedomLYNX® Banking, which consists of Free Checking for Life®, a low cost Money Market Account, Free Online Banking and Bill Pay, Overdraft Coverage, Direct Deposit, Free Debit Card and Free Automated Phone Banking; TimeLYNX® Flexible Certificates of Deposit; AutoLYNX Vehicle Loans; HomeLYNX® Home Equity Loans and Lines of Credit; RealLYNX® Residential Mortgages; CommerceLYNX® Business Banking; and Q-LYNX Quick Decision Business Loans. For more information about Merchants Bank, visit [mbvt.com](http://mbvt.com). Merchants' stock is traded on the NASDAQ National Market system under the symbol MBVT. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.