

# Hartley Elevated to Chairman Emeritus, Norton Elected Chairman

1/28/2015

TYLER, Texas, Jan. 28, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Southside Bancshares, Inc. ("Southside") (Nasdaq:SBSI). The Board of Directors, in recognition and appreciation of his 54 years of outstanding leadership and distinguished service, is proud to announce that B.G. Hartley has been elevated to the position of Chairman Emeritus effective January 1, 2015.

The Board has elected Joe Norton as the Chairman and Bob Garrett as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, both effective January 1, 2015. "Bill Hartley has been an outstanding community banker and civic leader for decades and the Board felt that this was an appropriate tribute to a man that was instrumental in building Southside into one of the premier financial institutions in Texas," stated Joe Norton, Chairman of the Board of Directors.

B.G. Hartley was CEO of Southside Bank since its opening in 1960, serving in that capacity until he retired in 2012 and served as Chairman of the Board of Directors through 2014. While CEO, he skillfully assembled a team of talented bankers and together they built Southside into the largest Bank headquartered in East Texas. In 1998 Southside began trading on the NASDAQ and today it has a market cap of approximately \$665 million. He was Chairman of the Board of Directors of Southside Bancshares, Inc. from 1982 through 2014 and served as CEO of Southside Bancshares since its inception until he retired in 2012. He is a former member of the American Bankers Association (ABA) Board of Directors, past Chairman of the ABANational BankPac Committee and a past member of the Administrative Committee of the ABA Government Relations Council. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of ETMC Regional Healthcare System and past Chairman of the Texas Taxpayers and Research Association.

Joe Norton was Vice Chairman of the Southside Bancshares, Inc. Board of Directors from May 2014 to December 2014. He has served on the Board of Directors of Southside Bancshares, Inc. since 1988 and Southside Bank since 1977. He owns Norton Equipment Company and is a general partner in Norton Leasing Ltd., LLP. He served as President and was a principal shareholder of Norton Companies of Texas, Inc. for 25 years, until 1989. He also owned W.D. Norton, Inc. d/b/a Overhead Door, for 16 years, until 2005. He is past Vice Chairman of the Board of Regents, East Texas State University (Texas A&M - Commerce) and serves as Vice President of Development on the Board of Trustees for All Saints Episcopal School of Tyler.

Bob Garrett has served on the Board of Directors of Southside Bancshares, Inc. and Southside Bank since 2009. He is a residential and commercial Real Estate Developer and has served as President of Fair Oil Company, a Tyler based oil and gas exploration and production company, since 2002. He is also Vice President of the R.W. Fair Foundation, a member of the Board of Regents at Stephen F. Austin State University and Chairman of the University of Texas Health Northeast Development Board. He is a past President of both the Tyler Area Builders Association and the Texas Association of Builders. He is a director of T.B. Butler Publishing, Inc., a member of the board of the Tyler Economic Development Council and the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute.

About Southside Bancshares, Inc.

Southside Bancshares, Inc. is a bank holding company with approximately \$4.9 billion in assets that owns 100% of Southside Bank. Southside Bank currently has 64 banking centers in Texas and operates a network of over 70 ATMs.

To learn more about Southside Bancshares, Inc., please visit our investor relations website at [www.southside.com/investor](http://www.southside.com/investor). Southside's investor relations site provides a detailed overview of its activities, financial information and historical stock price data. To receive e-mail notification of company news, events and stock activity, please register on the E-mail Notification portion of the website. Questions or comments may be directed to Lee Gibson at (903) 531-7221, or [lee.gibson@southside.com](mailto:lee.gibson@southside.com). Media contact is Lonny Uzzell at (903) 531-7241, or [lonny.uzzell@southside.com](mailto:lonny.uzzell@southside.com).

Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements of other than historical fact that are contained in this press release and in other written materials and oral statements issued by or on behalf of Southside may be considered to be "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of and subject to the protections of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance, nor should they be relied upon as representing management's views as of any subsequent date. These statements may include words such as

"expect," "estimate," "project," "anticipate," "appear," "believe," "could," "should," "may," "likely," "intend," "probability," "risk," "target," "objective," "plans," "potential," and similar expressions. Forward-looking statements are statements with respect to Southside's beliefs, plans, expectations, objectives, goals, anticipations, assumptions, estimates, intentions and future performance and are subject to significant known and unknown risks and uncertainties, which could cause Southside's actual results, respectively, to differ materially from the results discussed in the forward-looking statements. For example, statements about the future financial and operating results of Southside following the merger, Southside's plans, objectives, expectations and intentions, and other similar statements are not historical facts. Among the key factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by such forward-looking statements are the following: (i) the risk that the businesses will not be integrated successfully; (ii) the risk that the anticipated cost savings and any other synergies expected from the transaction may not be fully realized or may take longer to realize than expected; (iii) disruption from the transaction making it more difficult to maintain relationships with customers, employees or vendors; (iv) the diversion of management time on merger-related issues; (v) liquidity risk affecting Southside's ability to meet their obligations when they come due (vi) general economic conditions, either nationally or in our market areas, that are worse than expected and (vii) changes in our financial condition or results of operations that reduce capital available to pay dividends.

Additional information concerning Southside and its respective business, including additional factors that could materially affect its respective financial results, is included in Southside's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2013 under "Forward-Looking Information" and Item 1A. "Risk Factors," and in Southside's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"). Southside disclaims any obligation to update any factors or to announce publicly the result of revisions to any of the forward-looking statements included herein to reflect future events or developments.

Source: Southside Bancshares, Inc.