



NEWS RELEASE

Southside Bancshares, Inc. Declares Cash Dividend

11/12/2009

TYLER, Texas, Nov. 12 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The Board of Directors of Southside Bancshares, Inc., (Nasdaq: SBSI), parent company of Southside Bank declared a special cash dividend of \$0.20 per common share in addition to declaring a regular quarterly cash dividend of \$0.14 per share. "This special cash dividend was approved by the Board of Directors as a tangible method for shareholders to share in Southside's positive results reported during the first nine months of 2009," stated B. G. Hartley, Chairman of the Board and CEO. The combined \$0.34 per share cash dividend is payable to common stock shareholders of record November 25, 2009. The cash dividend is scheduled for payment on December 10, 2009.

"During the nine months ended September 30, 2009, we feel fortunate to have achieved significant earnings benchmarks. Due to the significant increase in our earnings, largely driven by favorable capital markets, the Board believes it is appropriate to share a portion of this success in the form of a special cash dividend. Cash dividends paid for 2009, including the cash dividends declared today, will total \$0.75 per share, a 25% increase over the cash dividends paid during 2008."

Southside Bancshares, Inc. is a bank holding company with approximately \$2.9 billion in assets that owns 100% of

Southside Bank. Southside Bank currently has 44 banking centers in Texas and operates a network of 47 ATMs.

To learn more about Southside Bancshares, Inc., please visit our investor relations website at www.southside.com/investor. Our investor relations site provides a detailed overview of our 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 Susan Hill at (903) 531-7220, or susan.hill@southside.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements of other than historical fact that are contained in this document and in other written material, press releases and oral statements issued by or on behalf of the Company, a bank holding company, 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," "intend," "probability," "risk," "target," "objective," "plans," "potential," and similar expressions. Forward-looking statements are statements with respect to the Company'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 the Company's actual results to differ materially from the results discussed in the forward-looking statements. For example, discussions of the effect of the Company's expansion, including expectations of the costs and profitability of such expansion, trends in asset quality and earnings from growth, and certain market risk disclosures are based upon information presently available to management and are dependent on choices about key model characteristics and assumptions and are subject to various limitations. By their nature, certain of the market risk disclosures are only estimates and could be materially different from what actually occurs in the future. As a result, actual income gains and losses could materially differ from those that have been estimated.

Additional information concerning the Company and its business, including additional factors that could materially affect the Company's financial results, is included in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008 under "Forward-Looking Information" and Item 1A. "Risk Factors," and in the Company's other

filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Company 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.

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