

E N V I R O N M E N T A L,
S O C I A L A N D
G O V E R N A N C E
R E P O R T

20
21

**20
21**



**EQUITY
BANK**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

page
3

CEO MESSAGE

A message from Brad Elliott, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Equity Bancshares, Inc.

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

A visual representation of Equity Bank's environmental, social, and governance efforts.

page
4

page
6

OUR BANK'S APPROACH AND ASPIRATIONS

As we reflect on Equity's growth and accomplishments this year, we set goals to strive toward in the future.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The impact on our environment is at the center of Equity's decision-making process, and we continue to implement sustainable practices at every branch.

page
7

page
8

ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

We have a responsibility to society and to our communities. Equity thrives as a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the communities we serve.

ACROSS OUR TEAM

Strong governance leads to a stronger team, and all Equity employees are held to a high standard that is built on our core values.

page
10

page
13

COVID-19 RESPONSE

The public's health and safety continue to remain at the forefront of how Equity runs its branches. This year, we learned to be resilient and adaptable through challenging times.

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

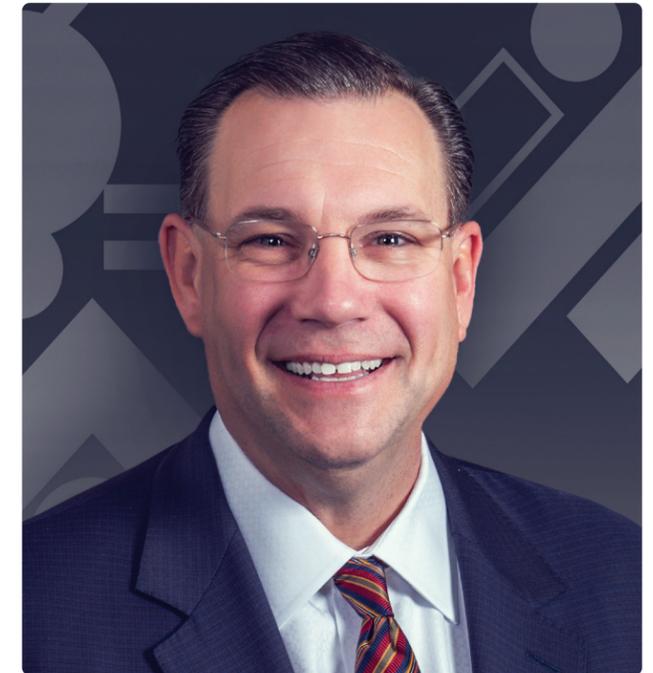
We never forget ... it's your money.

Our brand promise informs who we are as a company, and who we are as a trusted financial provider that helps individuals, businesses, and communities with their financial futures, never forgetting the trust and the solace that the customer places with their bank. Our teams work extremely hard to earn that trust, each and every day.

As a community bank, our mission is to serve our teammates, our customers, and our regions with innovation, expertise and dedication to a shared future that provides equity for all. You can see this reflected in pages of this report, with Equity Bank team members helping schools and helping communities, with a focus on sustainable energy in our facilities, products, and mission, and in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our goal in providing this overview is to highlight the work of our Equity Bank team in partnership with our customers and communities, with the hope of a brighter, better future in mind as we collectively tackle challenges looming in the future – a change in environment, community challenges, public health, and more. A bank like ours should help lead these efforts within our walls and within our regions, and we hope to showcase some of our efforts in these pages.

It's our belief that our Environmental, Social and Governance report reflects our shared Equity Bank values: Integrity, Community Focus, Accountability, Respect and



Entrepreneurial Spirit. We don't intend for this report to be a final word. I'm pleased to use these pages to help tell the story of Equity Bank, and our responsibility to work together with our customers and communities in partnership for a better world, for all of us.

We never forget ... it's our future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Elliott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B".

Brad Elliott
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Equity Bancshares, Inc.

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

LENDING

(Since programs began in 2020)

\$284 million

Main Street Lending Program



7,392

Paycheck Protection Program loans

39%
new customers to Equity

\$701 million total

\$88,000
average loan size

100,000+
employees helped

COMMUNITY

(During calendar year January 1, 2021-December 31, 2021)

\$2.3 MILLION

in community donations and sponsorships

Donated over
3,000

books to local students as part of our annual Bank On Reading initiative

21

Sponsored classrooms through Bank on Reading

16

virtual readings done by Equity Bank team members that attracted

13,427 views

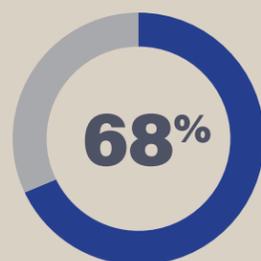
944

Community Volunteer Hours.

Employees receive 1 paid day off to volunteer

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

(As of December 31, 2021)



of our employee base is female



of Equity Bank officers comprised of women or individuals of minority descent

ENVIRONMENTAL

(As of and for calendar year ending December 31, 2021)

14%
facilities utilize LED lighting

1

free-standing ATM facility powered by solar energy

397

trees were saved via shredding/recycling at headquarters

2,790

cubic feet of old technology sent to e-cycle

48%

accounts utilize eStatements

COVID-19

(Since beginning of COVID-19 pandemic and procedures in 2020)

3

On-site Vaccine Clinics

400

vaccinations provided for team members and spouses

0

jobs eliminated

0

pay reductions

0

facilities closed

CAREER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

(As of and for calendar year ending December 31, 2021)

78

instructor-led courses

650+

e-learning courses

2,855

Total hours

5,450

Total hours

OUR BANK'S APPROACH AND ASPIRATIONS

Our newest facility, in Overland Park, Kansas, opened in 2020 and prioritizes natural light, with photocells to harvest daylight and minimize electrical usage during business hours.

Equity Bank's environmental, social, and governance commitments play a central role in our strategic decisions. We aim to strengthen our team and communities as part of our core values, and through adherence to these principles, we hope to create positive social and environmental change. This year, we placed the health and safety of all those involved with Equity at the forefront of what we do. The Equity workforce showed adaptability and growth, and we provided financial guidance and support to our local customers and colleagues during a transformative time.

As a community bank, our mission is to help our customers reach their financial goals and improve their financial well-being. To grow and progress as a financial institution, Equity's leaders are constantly working to build a team that reflects the diverse communities we serve. Equity welcomes diverse perspectives and novel ideas in order to become a better bank, recognized for its innovation and longevity. Improving our diversity and inclusion efforts, as well as creating a more sustainable institution, is an ongoing process. We are proud of the steps that we have taken thus far, but we recognize all of the opportunities that lie ahead.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Equity Bank strives to make organizational decisions based on environmental responsibility. We continually evaluate how to make our facilities more sustainable, and our vision of responsible banking informs decisions that we make. As we look toward the future, Equity plans to decrease our environmental footprint by investing in sustainable business practices involving renewable energy, energy efficiency, and waste management.

Sustainable Business Practices

Equity is committed to recycling, reusing, reducing waste, and minimizing the impact we leave. Equity encourages sustainable practices for both its team and customers. Now, 48% of Equity accounts use the paperless eStatements option for account statements. At our headquarters, nearly 400 trees were saved via shredding and recycling services. We also recorded 2,790 cubic feet of old technology that was sent to e-cycle in an effort to securely dispose of office materials and reduce our negative impact on the planet.

Energy Efficiency

One of Equity's sustainability efforts is to improve our facilities' energy and water efficiency. Equity currently runs one of its free-standing ATM facilities relying on solar energy, which is an emissions-free, renewable energy source. An additional 5% of our facilities utilize motion-activated lighting and 14% of our facilities use LED lighting. In the future, it is our goal to incorporate LED lighting or solar panels at all facilities.

\$30,000 toward purchasing recycled and eco-friendly office supplies

Sustainable Spend

Equity facilities make a conscious effort to purchase eco-friendly and sustainable office materials to lower our carbon footprint. Sustainable supplies include those that are recycled, non-toxic, and created with less waste. This year, Equity spent nearly \$30,000 toward purchasing recycled and eco-friendly office supplies.



ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

At Equity Bank, community focus is one of our core values. Each day, we work toward building more equitable communities, and we encourage our workforce to support their local communities through our various initiatives and programs.

Community Involvement

Our employees may spend a paid day off annually to donate time back to the local community. This year, Equity employees reported 944 hours of Community Volunteer Hours.

WeCare Initiative: Equity launched our WeCare Volunteer initiative, which salutes team members and regions for volunteer performance throughout our company. We have also identified our 24 Community Ambassadors selected for their connection to the local community. These ambassadors develop and communicate activism in their local areas. WeCare is promoted to our employee base through leadership marketing, recognition on social media and in their markets, and prizes at our All Employee Meeting.



Community Development Purpose

In 2021, Equity contributed \$2.3 million in community sponsorships and donations.

Equity Bank offers additional support through community development loans. These loans impact affordable housing, community services, economic development, and revitalization and stabilization.



Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kansas City: Equity Bank employees have volunteered with Ronald McDonald House, spending time at the Kansas City location and helping during meals.



Financial Education and Outreach

Bank on Reading: Our Bank on Reading program teaches financial literacy to local school children in our branch communities. We believe that strong reading skills coincide with strong financial literacy, and we want to put an end to the problematic literacy statistics in America. Since the program's launch in 2019, Equity Bank has donated over 3,000 books and sponsored 21 classrooms. Children receive introductory financial literacy lessons, participate in bank visits and tour our vault.



Virtual Storytime: For a weekly social media event, Equity bankers record themselves reading a story for local children. We have completed 16 virtual readings that attracted 13,427 views, 423 reactions, and 300+ new social follows.

Financial Inclusion and Capacity Building

In an effort to make our financial products more accessible, Equity Bank has designated a bilingual branch. Our bilingual retail and customer care staff help better serve our Spanish-speaking clients.

Bank on Reading Checking Account: Beginning in August 2021, Equity donated \$25 to a local school or literacy organization when someone opened a new checking account with us. In six weeks, we raised over \$15,500 for the purchase of new books.



Scholastic Book Fair: Equity partnered with Storytime Village to sponsor a Scholastic Book Fair at Gordon Parks Academy in Wichita, Kansas. Through this book fair, students will be able to build their own home libraries.

ACROSS OUR TEAM

Equity Bank's committees assist the Board of Directors in the governance of ESG reporting and risk management.

Our Governance Structure

Equity's Risk and Governance Structure.

Equity Bank delegates ESG strategy, reporting, and risk management to committees that shepherd our vision for Equity's present and future.

- The Corporate Governance and Nominating Committee takes a leadership role in shaping Equity's corporate governance and identifies individuals qualified to become a member of Equity's Board of Directors.
- The Risk Committee assists the Board of Directors in enterprise-wide risk management policies and frameworks.
- The Audit Committee assists the Board of Directors in oversight responsibilities by reviewing and monitoring the financial reports and other information provided by Equity Bank to any governmental authority or the public. The Committee encourages improvement and adherence to Equity's policies, procedures, and practices.
- Other committees include the Trust Committee, Compensation Committee, and Credit Committee.

Our Recent Governance Initiatives

In 2021 we adopted additional policies for sound Equity Bancshares, Inc. governance and Equity Bank governance.

- Modified all executive agreements to include double trigger change of control standards
- Adopted annual shareholder "Say on Pay" vote
- Adopted minimum stock ownership requirement for executive-level employees
- Adopted Compensation Recoupment Policy
- Updated all committee charters and guidelines
- All independent Corporate Governance and Nominating Committee



Code of Business Conduct and Ethics

Equity Bancshares, Inc. and its subsidiaries (collectively, the "Company") hold a commitment to the highest standards of business conduct and full and accurate financial disclosure in compliance with applicable law. Obeying the law, both in letter and in spirit, is the foundation on which Equity's ethical standards are built. Although this Code does not discuss each situation that may arise within the institution, it sets out guiding principles for all those employed by Equity to follow.

Under our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, team members of Equity should promote honest and ethical conduct, accountability, internal reporting, compliance with laws and governmental regulation, and full, fair, accurate, timely, and understandable disclosure in reports and documents.

See Our Code of [Business Conduct and Ethics](#)

I CARE Values

At Equity Bank, our core values are defined through I CARE:

- **Integrity.** We're honest, transparent, and we follow through on our promises
- **Community Focus.** We give back to our neighbors when they need us most
- **Accountability.** We encourage each other to live up to our potential
- **Respect.** We value everything our employees and customers bring to the table
- **Entrepreneurial spirit.** We encourage our team to take ownership of their roles

Connection to Our Teams

Equity Vision. Communication is a priority, and this new initiative is based on feedback from our employee surveys. As a part of the Equity Vision series, there is a monthly video written and produced by an executive on a topic closely related to their role or activity happening in the bank.

Equity Elite. Our internal recognition program, Equity Elite, spotlights employees for exemplifying the ICARE values. Each quarter, five employees are nominated to receive bank-wide recognition, a gift, and a personal note from our CEO to recognize the employees' commitment to our core principles.

Soliciting Feedback. This year, we are honored to receive *Wichita Business Journal's* Best Places to Work Award. Equity is built on its people, and we recognize the vast amount of growth opportunities for our bank. To keep our bank operating efficiently, we conduct bank-wide employee surveys to ensure that we understand what is important to our team members. We survey on a quarterly, annual, and as-needed basis for special topics.



ACROSS OUR TEAM

Career Development

Equity offers a variety of training programs, e-learning, and instructor-led courses for employee development. These courses focus on emerging leaders, Equity University, best in class service, professional skills, and a number of banking courses. These courses strengthen leadership skills, customer relationships, and employee knowledge of Equity and its offerings.

Among Equity's workforce, 68% of our employee base is female. Today, women and individuals of minority descent make up over 55% of our local market leadership

Diversity and Inclusion

At Equity Bank, we are committed to a diverse and inclusive workforce that speaks to our core values and reflects the diverse communities we serve. The diversity of perspectives within our institution has strengthened our market leadership style and innovative thinking.

We adhere to a diversity and inclusion mission which states that Equity team members embrace our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation,

political affiliation, race, religion, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make employees unique.



2021 BEST PLACES TO WORK

We were humbled to receive Wichita Business Journal's Diversity and Inclusion Award three times. Equity was recognized for its commitment to diversity in our employee base, hiring practices, corporate citizenship, and programs that foster an inclusive culture. We provide team members with education, mentorship, and leadership programs to develop diverse leaders.



Our gender and race data is monitored by the Compensation Committee and is also shared with our Board of Directors. Among Equity's workforce, 68% of our employee base is female. Today, women and individuals of minority descent make up over 55% of our local market leadership. We are proud of our progress in this area so far, but we strive to further diversify our workforce and strengthen our culture of inclusion.



COVID-19 RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way that Equity Bank and its people work. The health of our customers and workforce comes first, and we implemented precautions to safeguard our team and community's well-being. Equity has continued to navigate the pandemic without major disruptions or impacts. For the health and well-being of coworkers and clients, anyone with suspected exposure is not permitted to enter any of our facilities. Those who meet certain criteria are required to self-quarantine for a time period consistent with applicable health guidance.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Salaries and Benefits

There were no pay reductions or eliminated jobs as a result of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Team members who were exposed to COVID-19 or who tested positive were granted pandemic-related paid time off to use instead of regular paid time off for sick days. This was designed to encourage associates to self-report and self-quarantine in order to reduce the potential of additional exposure to other on-site associates and to minimize business interruptions.

Due to increased travel restrictions and safety concerns, we implemented a grace period for vacation usage to encourage team members to delay vacation usage. We also provided flexible work arrangements to accommodate immunocompromised employees.



Supporting our Clients

Over the course of the pandemic, we facilitated 7,535 Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans totaling \$701 million. Through these loans, we impacted an estimated 95,000 employees. We also facilitated \$284 million of Main Street Lending loans. Equity provided financial assistance to our local communities in the ways that we could: 567 of Equity's customers took part in Equity's Skip a Pay Program, 66 rebuild accounts needed financial assistance, and we waived a total of \$1,609,406 in ATM fees.



Decision-Making

Members of the management team meet regularly to review strategic decisions and other pandemic-related issues. This review includes feedback from weekly memos from our human resources director as well as surveys gauging employee impact and mental health sent to all team members.

Supporting our Team Members

Workstation Distancing. During periods of high infection rates, the operational department's workstations were distanced to reduce the spread.

Supplies. Each branch and its departmental area is provided with supplies including CleanSmart disinfectant, thermometers, and masks. Our teller lines were instructed to disinfect their workstations after each teller transaction.

Daily Health Questionnaire. Thermometers were provided to each bank and departmental area, and daily checks were implemented.

On-site Vaccine and Vaccine Booster Clinics. Our human resources team worked with local health departments to schedule vaccines for employees and set up on-site vaccine clinics. Equity provided on-site vaccine clinics in three locations, two in Kansas City and one in Wichita. Employees, building tenants, and their families were able to receive COVID-19 vaccinations at the on-site locations. In December, Equity also hosted a COVID-19 booster clinic for employees and their families.



Employee Survey. Equity wanted to support and hear from team members, so we surveyed all Equity employees regarding COVID-19 and their work environments. Over 75% of employees agreed or strongly agreed that Equity did a great job with internal pandemic-related communication. When asked to rate their mental well-being, 74% of employees responded 'Excellent' or 'Good,' and the average rating for their feelings toward a return to a post-pandemic work environment was an 8 out of 10.





20
21