PNC Bank Commits $4 Million to Support Georgia Small Business Owners

EQ2 investment with ACE increases economic opportunity in vulnerable communities

ATLANTA, July 30, 2024 – PNC Bank has entered into a $4 million investment agreement with ACE | Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs Inc. to fund affordable and accessible loans to women, people of color and low- to moderate-income small business owners in Georgia. The equity equivalent investment, or EQ2, will help accelerate ACE's efforts to increase economic opportunity and improve financial health in vulnerable communities throughout the state.

"While small business growth in Georgia consistently ranks among the top in the country, these entrepreneurs often struggle to access the resources that will help them survive and thrive," said Eddie Meyers, PNC regional president for Georgia. "By continuing our long-standing support of ACE with this EQ2 investment, we can leverage the power of PNC's resources to assist small business owners and strengthen our local economies."

An EQ2 is a deeply subordinated loan product with features that allow it to work like revolving equity and help investors support longer-term lending activities of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). As a certified nonprofit CDFI, ACE leverages EQ2 investments to provide low-cost capital solutions to entrepreneurs in underserved markets. ACE specializes in small-business loans coupled with business advisory services, providing borrowers with critical financial resources and the customized support they need to build sustainable businesses to support themselves, their families, and their employees.

ACE currently serves 100 counties in Georgia, with offices in metro Atlanta, Cleveland and Tifton, and ACE Women's Business Centers in Norcross and Savannah. PNC's investment supports ACE's five-year strategic growth plan that is set to deliver as much as $300 million in equitable loan capital to catalyze small business growth.

"This capital infusion has real economic and community impacts, as ACE anticipates helping 1,500 small business owners create or save more than 10,000 jobs through the state of Georgia," said Martina Edwards, chief of strategic partnerships at ACE.

Grace Fricks, ACE's founder, president & CEO noted, "We're also pleased to be able to celebrate our valued relationship with the team at PNC and their consistent support of ACE in its growth, reach and scaled impact.

The EQ2 investment was facilitated by PNC's Community Development Banking group, which works to improve quality of life in low- to moderate-income (LMI) neighborhoods through affordable housing, community development lending, economic development, financial education and customized financial solutions.

PNC's investment stems from its $88 billion Community Benefits Plan, which provides loans, investments and other financial support to bolster economic opportunity for LMI individuals, communities and people of color over a four-year period that began Jan. 1, 2022. As part of the allotted $88 billion, PNC has committed to provide at least $14.5 billion in community development loans and investments across all markets, including at least $400 million for Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) that help meet the banking and financial service needs of traditionally underserved communities.

Businesses established for two or more years can apply for affordable loans from ACE at aceloans.org.

About ACE | Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs
ACE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and community development financial institution (CDFI) that provides loans and business development resources to help its borrowers create and grow sustainable businesses. ACE has been included on Atlanta Business Chronicle's list of 75 largest nonprofits in Atlanta for the last 4 years. For more than 20 years, ACE has been the resource of choice for those who are typically not financed fully by traditional lenders. With a focus on underserved people and places, ACE connects small businesses owned by women, people of color and low to moderate income borrowers in more than 100 counties throughout North Georgia, metro Atlanta and South Georgia with capital and coaching to sustain their businesses, retain their employees, and thereby support their local communities. ACE has offices in Westside Atlanta, Cleveland, GA, Dalton, GA and Tifton, GA, and ACE Women's Business Center locations in Norcross, GA and Savannah, GA. For more information, visit www.aceloans.org.

About PNC Bank
PNC Bank, N.A., is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC). PNC is one of the largest diversified financial services institutions in the United States, organized around its customers and communities for strong relationships and local delivery of retail and business banking including a full range of lending products; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. For information about PNC, visit www.pnc.com.

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