



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Merchants Bank Supports the 30th Anniversary of the
Vermont Job Start Initiative!**

MONTPELIER, VT –Thomas S. Leavitt, Executive Vice President for Merchants Bank is pleased to announce another Vermont Matters initiative via the company's support of Community Capital of Vermont, a non-profit organization and Vermont Job Start Loan Fund, a state initiative to create more jobs via support of micro businesses that are unable to secure traditional bank financing.

"For each Reward Business Checking account that is opened during the next three months (by July 1, 2008) Merchants Bank will donate \$100 on behalf of the customer to Community Capital of Vermont's Vermont Job Start Loan Fund. Merchants Bank appreciates the value of that small business brings to the communities within Vermont. This is our way of lending our support to Vermont—statewide," commented Leavitt.

"This program is an important and significant part of our efforts to reinvest in the community," said Doreen Allen, Merchants Bank Community Reinvestment Act Officer, Northfield branch.

Merchants Bank, The Vermont Economic Development Authority and Community Capital of Vermont will hold a conference event to announce the 30th anniversary of the Vermont Job Start Loan Fund and its new home at Community Capital of Vermont at the Vermont Statehouse's Cedar Creek Room today at 3:30pm (Tuesday, May 6).

Vermont Matters! 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. Merchants Bank fulfills this commitment through a branch-based system that includes 36 community bank offices and 44 ATMs throughout Vermont, Personal Bankers dedicated to top-quality customer service and streamlined solutions, including: Personal Banking with *CashRewards* Checkingsm, 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; Business Banking with Business Online Banking and Bill Pay, Business Lines of Credit and Merchant Card Processing; Small Business Loans; Health Savings Accounts; Credit Cards; Flexible Certificates of Deposit; Vehicle Loans; Home Equity Credit; and Home Mortgages. Visit mbvt.com for more information. Merchants' stock is traded on the NASDAQ National Market system under the symbol MBVT. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.

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