

20 Under 40 Award: Tompkins State Bank's Amber Smith



Amber Smith is a mortgage loan officer at Tompkins State Bank, 1380 N. Henderson St., in Galesburg. She is a recipient of the "20 Under 40" award. LEWIS ARIEN/The Register-Mail

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GALESBURG — This week's recipient of the Young Professionals of Galesburg and the Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce's "20 Under 40" award to be profiled is Amber Smith, mortgage loan officer with Tompkins State Bank.

According to the nomination, Smith "goes above and beyond for her clients and is known to refer to other young professionals ... she is always giving it her all in the community, all while juggling at home responsibilities."

Here's more about Smith in her own words:

Q. What do you do in your current position?

A. Fixed rate mortgage (conventional, first time home buyer, rural development, VA) loans for purchase transactions and refinances for primary residences, second homes, investment properties, etc. I'm always here to talk with people about the process. I've had a lot of clients that were unsure if buying was an option for them. We talk about your options and if necessary, what you need to do to make home buying a reality. I also try to come up with overall solutions for my customers whether it be refinancing to use equity in your home for projects, lowering monthly payments or shortening the term to save in the long run. I pride myself in going the extra mile to help my clients.

Q. How are you involved in the community?

A. CASA of Knox County board member and past treasurer; BNI (Business Networking International) of Galesburg member (past president, vice president and treasurer); Big Brothers Big Sisters — I have been matched with my "little" Kiandra for the past three years; Relay for Life team member (past team leader); and YPG member. I try to contribute where I can through events and fundraisers too.

Q. Of what achievement are you most proud?

A. Being a full-time working mom. It's not for the faint of heart. I really enjoy my job and volunteering/fundraising but my kids are the best accomplishment I will ever have and probably the most stressful. I'm able to progress in my career while balancing my "zoo" at home due to my understanding husband and the flexibility that Tompkins State Bank has allowed me. I started at TSB five years ago doing marketing and they have been great about helping me grow professionally ... and personally.

Q. What advice do you have for other young professionals?

A. Always keep learning. Strive to learn as much as you can about your job and organization ... in this day and age, companies are asking people to wear multiple hats. The more you know, the more valuable you are and the further you can progress!

Q. What's the most important thing people should know about your community?

A. This community is a "little, big town." There is a great sense of community and people who are willing to help those less fortunate. Unfortunately, there are also plenty of people in need. For example, CASA of Knox County is currently serving 97 abused and neglected kids in Knox County alone. Sadly, bad stuff happens here just like the big cities. Because of amazing advocates (and many others) donating their time, these children have a voice. Everyone has the ability to help others, no matter how big or small. If your able to donate to a food pantry, give your time to a kid in foster care, or fund-raise for a charity you're passionate about ... do so!

Amber Smith

Age: 33; **Residence:** Knoxville; **Profession:** Mortgage loan officer, Tompkins State Bank; **Education:** Associate degree from Carl Sandburg, bachelor's from Robert Morris University; **Family:** Husband, Neil is a civil engineer at Bruner, Cooper & Zuck; two sons, Briar, 4, and Reid almost 10 months.

About the award

The Young Professionals of Galesburg and the Galesburg Area Chamber of Commerce have launched the "20 Under 40" award.

This award honors 20 individuals under the age of 40 considered to be "movers and shakers" in the community.

Honorees will be profiled each week through Jan. 31, 2016, in The Register-Mail. They will be included in a special supplement in February 2016, in addition to being recognized at the chamber's annual dinner to be held in February 2016.

The 20 honorees are judged on their outstanding career achievements and community impact. A panel of judges evaluated each nomination on information provided in the following categories: Reason for nomination, career achievements/special awards and recognition, community involvement, volunteerism and community service leadership skills.