



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 6, 2012

**Contact:** Megan Bobiak, BankFIRST  
407-629-8466 Ext 13186

**BANKFIRST ACQUIRES EAST COAST COMMUNITY BANK,  
NAMES RAFAEL A. RAMIREZ, JR. PRESIDENT, VOLUSIA COUNTY AND  
DENNIS E. BRINN AREA PRESIDENT, PORT ORANGE**

**Winter Park, Florida** – (January 6, 2012) – BankFIRST of Winter Park, Florida, announced today that it has completed the acquisition of Ormond Beach, Florida-based East Coast Community Bank. BankFIRST’s President and CEO, Donald J. McGowan commented, “We are excited to expand our franchise into the Volusia County marketplace. The acquisition of East Coast Community Bank provides us with a new presence in this market. The addition of approximately \$74 million in deposits and two branch locations in Ormond Beach and Port Orange further enhance our greater Central Florida footprint. We look forward to extending BankFIRST’s tradition of Gold Star Quality Service to the Volusia market and, in the process, earning the respect and trust of East Coast’s clients and employees.”

Rafael Ramirez, President and CEO of East Coast, stated, “BankFIRST’s strength and stability, expansive, state-of-the-art product suite, and unparalleled Gold Star Quality Service equate to a very positive transition for our clients. Additional business services that allow our customers to make deposits, initiate wire transfers, and generally bank without leaving their office make this change exciting to us. These enhancements will be implemented with little change in account structures, service fees, or interest rates on current accounts, and our fine staff will continue to serve clients on a day-to-day basis as they have for the past 14 years.”

As a result of the acquisition, Ramirez, who has served as President and CEO of East Coast since 2003, will assume management of the local offices in Ormond Beach and Port Orange as Regional President, Volusia County. Industry veteran, Dennis E. Brinn has also joined the bank, and been named Area President, Port Orange. A long-time resident of the Daytona Beach area, Brinn brings nearly 30 years of Executive level-leadership and community banking experience to his new role. Most recently, he served as President, Chief Executive Officer and Director at Sunshine State Community Bank (SSCB), Port Orange. A de novo institution, Brinn was responsible for organizing SSCB in 1999, and was instrumental in all elements of the bank’s development, while serving as an active Member of the Board of Directors.

- more -

"Dennis' extensive background in commercial lending and Executive Management is extremely impressive and we are very pleased to welcome him to our team. His reputation in the marketplace precedes him, both professionally, and as evidenced by his continued commitment to the Volusia community," Ramirez said.

"I am very excited to remain in the Volusia county market and equally excited to be with a quality organization like BankFIRST," Brinn said.

The transaction was finalized on December 30, 2011.

### **About BankFIRST**

Since its founding in 1989 as a state-chartered, federally insured commercial bank, BankFIRST has grown its assets to over \$680 million. Situated in Central Florida, BankFIRST has twelve branch offices located in Orange, Seminole, Lake, Brevard, and Volusia Counties, and has approximately 140 employees. BankFIRST provides commercial banking services, including real estate, construction and commercial loans, primarily to individuals and small and medium-sized businesses.

BankFIRST has been the recipient of numerous awards including: "Best Community Bank in Central Florida" by the readers of the Orlando Business Journal in 2006 and 2009, "Best Bank in Seminole County" in 2008 and 2009, "2009 Business Achievement Award for Civic and Community Efforts" by the Lake Eustis Chamber of Commerce, US Small Business Administration's "#1 Community Bank SBA Lender" designation in the North Florida District, and the "#1 Small Business Lender in Florida". For more information on BankFIRST, visit [www.bankfirst.com](http://www.bankfirst.com).

- more -

## **FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This press release contains certain forward-looking information about The BANKshares, Inc. and its subsidiary (BankFIRST). All statements other than statements of historical fact are forward-looking statements. Such statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties, many of which are difficult to predict and are generally beyond the control of ECCB. BankFIRST cautions readers that a number of important factors could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed in, implied, or projected by, such forward-looking statements. Risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to: the possibility that personnel changes will not proceed as planned; planned acquisitions and relative cost savings cannot be realized or realized within the expected time frame; revenues are lower than expected; competitive pressure among depository institutions increases significantly; the integration of acquired businesses costs more, takes longer, or is less successful than expected; the cost of additional capital is more than expected; a change in the interest rate environment reduces interest margins; general economic conditions, either nationally or in the market areas in which The BANKshares, Inc. does or anticipates doing business, are less favorable than expected; legislative or regulatory requirements or changes adversely affect BankFIRST's business; or changes in the securities markets. If any of these risks or uncertainties materializes or if any of the assumptions underlying such forward-looking statements proves to be incorrect, The BANKshares, Inc.'s results could differ materially from those expressed in, implied, or projected by such forward-looking statements. The BANKshares, Inc. assumes no obligation to update such forward-looking statements.

###