

For Immediate Release
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Gibbons Named 2007-2008 Independent Banker of the Year



Mr. H. Blake Gibbons, Jr., President and Chief Operating Officer of the Citizens Bank and Citizens Bancshares Corporation, Olanta, SC, was named Independent Banker of the Year by the Independent Banks of South Carolina (IBSC) at the IBSC Convention in July, 2007 at The Westin Savannah Harbor, Savannah, Georgia. A native of New Zion, S.C., he and his wife Sherrilyn have two children and one grandchild.

Gibbons is a Past President and Board Member of IBSC and currently serves as a member of the State Board of Financial Institutions. He received a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of South Carolina and is a 1991 graduate of the Banking School of the South at Louisiana State University. Prior to his 28 year tenure with his current bank he was employed by the State Board of Financial Institutions as a bank examiner. He is actively involved in local civic organizations and is an avid golfer.

The Independent Banker of the Year is selected from the 53 independent banks in South Carolina. The honor is awarded annually on the basis of outstanding service to the independent banking industry and to the local community. The Independent Banks of South Carolina is an association of 68 locally owned and operated banks in South Carolina, which promotes the interests and general welfare of the independent banks within the state.