

FLORIDA BANKING

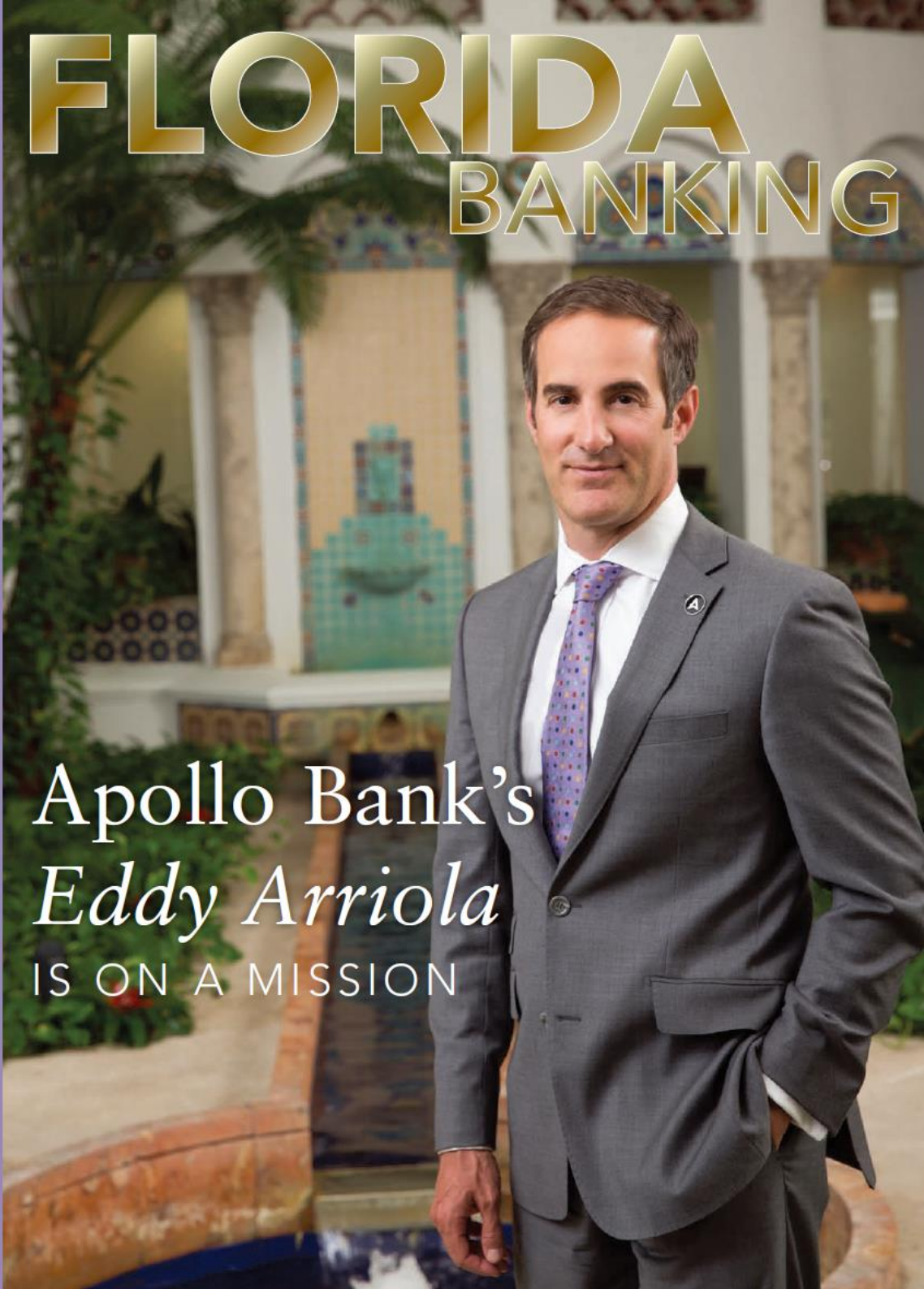
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Apollo Bank's *Eddy Arriola* IS ON A MISSION

Apollo Bank's name was inspired by the world's first successful mission to put a man on the moon. The Apollo Lunar Mission was groundbreaking and is a reminder to Apollo Bank's founder, board and employees that anything is possible.

"For me, that Apollo space launch is the perfect example of what can happen when you get smart people to work together toward a common mission. Despite naysayers, non-believers and negativity, they got the job done and accomplished things that some thought would be impossible," said Apollo Bank Founder, Chairman and CEO Eddy Arriola. "In the same vein, we at Apollo Bank try to ensure we've got lots of smart, hard-working people working together to accomplish a mission. While we're not redefining space travel, we are doing important work and we regularly look at measures to determine our success."

The bank's leadership regularly sets goals — both short-term and long-term. In fact, two important goals were recently accomplished. The first was reaching \$500 million in total assets, which Apollo Bank achieved in the close of the June 30, 2015 quarter. The second accomplished goal was earning recognition as one of *Florida Trend* magazine's "Best Companies to Work For in Florida," which was announced in the July 2015 issue.

"We have been working very hard and I am very proud of our team," said Arriola. "Both are great achievements and had been goals that we set for ourselves. Now, we have new goals of building up to \$1 billion in total assets over the next three to five years and to have one of the best places to work in the nation."

The Timing Was Right

Since it was established in March of 2010, markers of Apollo Bank's growth in addition to the increase in deposits include its 100 employees and seven branches that provide service to all of South Florida through locations in the key business hubs of Miami. Its headquarters is just off Brickell Avenue in the heart of Miami's downtown business district.

"We knew we wanted to start a bank but, because of the timing, new charters weren't being approved. By acquiring a bank, Union Credit Bank, we were able to enter the market without waiting any longer," said Arriola.

An entrepreneur and businessman, Arriola's first involvement with the inner workings of community banking was as an investor and board member of TotalBank.

"Adrienne Arsht is a longtime family friend and at the time I became involved, she was looking for active board members," said Arriola. "I was young and I found out very quickly that I really loved it. I found it interesting to learn a different industry and though I had some experience with larger and investment banks, this was my first exposure to the business of community banking."

TotalBank had great success and Arriola's involvement was very positive.

"I discovered that community banking combined things that I love: business, community involvement and building things," said Arriola. "At the time of that discovery, I thought that one day I'd love being in banking. However, I figured it would be much later in life, maybe when I was in my sixties."

However, fate had a different plan. In November 2007, TotalBank sold and soon thereafter, the Great Recession began. For Arriola, it seemed like the right time — personally and professionally — so he decided to take advantage of the opportunity.

"Since the beginning, my mission has always been to create a great company," said Arriola. "Twenty years from now, I want for the people who are currently employees to be able to point to their resumes and remember this place and say, 'that was the best place I ever worked. I loved working there and I loved the people.'"

Arriola went on to note that he believes employees' happiness may be an even higher priority than customers' happiness because if employees are happy, they will do all they can to ensure that customers are happy, which will in turn please the board and investors.

“Our employees are a key part of the equation and guarantee our success. We value our employees and appreciate their perspective and opinions,” said Arriola.

An Entrepreneurial Perspective

Arriola values the advice and experience of others and relies heavily on the professional staff at the bank. He has also developed relationships with peers through the FBA.

“From day one I wanted to be actively involved with the FBA in order to find mentors and to find banks we could work with and learn from. I saw it as being very important in our development and believe that it helped with our building credibility,” said Arriola. “Banking can cause you to get stuck in doing things a certain way. Whenever we hit a roadblock, I can call a friend in another part of the state to get advice and learn from how they’ve handled similar issues.”

Apollo Bank employees are also valued for their opinions and Arriola thinks that it’s an advantage that members of the staff worked at different banks before joining forces on the same team.

“The fact that our staff comes from different banks brings a diversity of perspective that has been priceless,” said Arriola.

But, for Arriola, the main common denominator of all employees is that they think like businesspeople. In fact, it’s one of the bank’s core values.

“We try to hire people with business experience or an entrepreneurial mentality. Our clients, many of whom are entrepreneurs or have family-owned businesses, would say that’s what makes us different,” said Arriola.

Arriola believes that he is an entrepreneur by nature. In fact, he has started a number of successful businesses, including Inktel, a call center company based in Miami that has national reach. Many members of his family have also been entrepreneurs including his maternal and paternal grandfathers, his father and his brothers.

An Exciting Time

“In the next few years, I expect that we will continue to grow. It’s what our management, employees and investors want to do,” said Arriola. “We’ve had two acquisitions so far and we’re open to additional acquisitions. We have access to capital and I could see perhaps having another acquisition within the next two to four years in addition to expected organic growth.”

Right now, Arriola is enjoying what he describes as an exciting time in banking, particularly in South Florida.

“It has been interesting and educational to have experienced very defined cycles in Florida’s banking industry,” said Arriola. “I am optimistic about what the future holds.”

Arriola is positive and energetic. He is also able to reflect on how being a banker has allowed for the intersection of his passions — entrepreneurship, people and growing a business.

“What I always set out to do was build a great company,” said Arriola. “I am honored that our board, investors and employees allow me to focus on that mission every day.”



MEET EDDY ARRIOLA

Eddy Arriola serves as chairman and CEO of Miami-based Apollo Bank, a full-service commercial bank with \$500 million in assets. Previously, he was co-founder of Inktel, a call center company based in Miami with a presence across the United States.

Arriola is actively involved in the banking industry, serving on the FBA’s Board of Directors, BancServ Board of Directors, and the ABA Community Bank Advisory Council. In 2011, Arriola was awarded the FBA’s Horizon Award.

An engaged member of the community, Arriola’s civic involvements include bringing national mentoring program City Year to Miami, acting as a board member for Kristi House and serving on the boards of several non-for-profit organizations.

In 2011, President Obama appointed Arriola to the board of directors of the Inter-American Foundation, an independent U.S. agency focused on grassroots development throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2014, President Obama appointed Arriola chairman of the board of the Inter-American Foundation. He has served as a presenter and speaker at more than two dozen universities and business conferences throughout the nation.

Arriola earned a bachelor’s degree in history from Boston College and graduated from Harvard Business School’s OPM Program.