

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS INC  
Form 10-K  
March 14, 2018  
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**UNITED STATES**  
**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**  
**Washington, D.C. 20549**

(Mark One)

**Form 10-K**

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017

OR

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
Commission file number **000-26481**

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, INC.**

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

**NEW YORK**

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

**16-0816610**

(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

**220 LIBERTY STREET, WARSAW, NEW YORK**

(Address of principal executive offices)

**14569**

(ZIP Code)

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Registrant's telephone number, including area code: **(585) 786-1100**

Securities registered under Section 12(b) of the Exchange Act:

Title of each class	Name of exchange on which registered
<b>Common stock, par value \$.01 per share</b>	<b>NASDAQ Global Select Market</b>
Securities registered under Section 12(g) of the Exchange Act:	<b>NONE</b>

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the past 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§ 232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K (§ 229.405 of this chapter) is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of the registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements

incorporated by reference in Part III of this form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer, smaller reporting company and emerging growth company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer	Accelerated filer
Non-accelerated filer	Smaller reporting company
	Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act). Yes  No

The aggregate market value of the registrant's common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, held by non-affiliates of the registrant, as computed by reference to the June 30, 2017 closing price reported by NASDAQ, was approximately \$427,573,000.

As of February 23, 2018, there were outstanding, exclusive of treasury shares, 15,904,403 shares of the registrant's common stock.

**DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

Portions of the registrant's proxy statement for the 2018 Annual Meeting of Shareholders are incorporated by reference in Part III of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

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**PART I**

**FORWARD LOOKING INFORMATION**

Statements and financial analysis contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K that are based on other than historical data are forward-looking within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements provide current expectations or forecasts of future events and include, among others:

statements with respect to the beliefs, plans, objectives, goals, guidelines, expectations, anticipations, and future financial condition, results of operations and performance of Financial Institutions, Inc. (the Parent or FII ) and its subsidiaries (collectively, the Company, we, our or us ); and

statements preceded by, followed by or that include the words may, could, should, would, believe, estimate, expect, intend, plan, projects or similar expressions.

These forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance, nor should they be relied upon as representing management's views as of any subsequent date. Forward-looking statements involve significant risks and uncertainties and actual results may differ materially from those presented, either expressed or implied, in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, including, but not limited to, those presented in the Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations. Factors that might cause such material differences include, but are not limited to:

- If we experience greater credit losses than anticipated, earnings may be adversely impacted;
- Our tax strategies and the value of our deferred tax assets and liabilities could adversely affect our operating results and regulatory capital ratios;
- Geographic concentration may unfavorably impact our operations;
- We depend on the accuracy and completeness of information about or from customers and counterparties;
- Our insurance brokerage subsidiary, SDN, is subject to risk related to the insurance industry;
- Our investment advisory and wealth management operations are subject to risk related to the financial services industry;
- We may be unable to successfully implement our growth strategies, including the integration and successful management of newly-acquired businesses;
- We are subject to environmental liability risk associated with our lending activities;
- Our commercial business and mortgage loans increase our exposure to credit risks;
- Our indirect lending involves risk elements in addition to normal credit risk;
- We accept deposits that do not have a fixed term and which may be withdrawn by the customer at any time for any reason;
- Any future FDIC insurance premium increases may adversely affect our earnings;
- We are highly regulated and any adverse regulatory action may result in additional costs, loss of business opportunities, and reputational damage;
- We make certain assumptions and estimates in preparing our financial statements that may prove to be incorrect, which could significantly impact our results of operations, cash flows and financial condition, and we are subject to new or changing accounting rules and interpretations, and the failure by us to correctly interpret or apply these evolving rules and interpretations could have a material adverse effect;

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- Legal and regulatory proceedings and related matters could adversely affect us;
- A breach in security of our or third party information systems, including the occurrence of a cyber incident or a deficiency in cybersecurity, or a failure by us to comply with enhanced New York State cybersecurity regulations, may subject us to liability, result in a loss of customer business or damage our brand image;
- We face competition in staying current with technological changes to compete and meet customer demands;
- We rely on other companies to provide key components of our business infrastructure;
- We use financial models for business planning purposes that may not adequately predict future results;
- We may not be able to attract and retain skilled people;
- Acquisitions may disrupt our business and dilute shareholder value;
- We are subject to interest rate risk;
- Our business may be adversely affected by conditions in the financial markets and economic conditions generally;
- The policies of the Federal Reserve have a significant impact on our earnings;
- The soundness of other financial institutions could adversely affect us;
- The value of our goodwill and other intangible assets may decline in the future;
- We operate in a highly competitive industry and market area;
- Severe weather, natural disasters, acts of war or terrorism, and other external events could significantly impact our business;
- Liquidity is essential to our businesses;
- We may need to raise additional capital in the future and such capital may not be available on acceptable terms or at all;
- We rely on dividends from our subsidiaries for most of our revenue;
- We may not pay or may reduce the dividends on our common stock;

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- We may issue debt and equity securities or securities convertible into equity securities, any of which may be senior to our common stock as to distributions and in liquidation, which could dilute our current shareholders or negatively affect the value of our common stock;
- Our certificate of incorporation, our bylaws, and certain banking laws may have an anti-takeover effect; and
- The market price of our common stock may fluctuate significantly in response to a number of factors.

We caution readers not to place undue reliance on any forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date made, and advise readers that various factors, including those described above, could affect our financial performance and could cause our actual results or circumstances for future periods to differ materially from those anticipated or projected. See also Item 1A, Risk Factors, of this Annual Report on Form 10-K for further information. Except as required by law, we do not undertake, and specifically disclaim any obligation to publicly release any revisions to any forward-looking statements to reflect the occurrence of anticipated or unanticipated events or circumstances after the date of such statements.

**ITEM 1. BUSINESS**

**GENERAL**

The Parent is a financial holding company organized in 1931 under the laws of New York State ( New York or NYS ). The principal office of the Parent is located at 220 Liberty Street, Warsaw, New York 14569 and its telephone number is (585) 786-1100. The Parent was incorporated on September 15, 1931, but the continuity of the Company's banking business is traced to the organization of the National Bank of Geneva on March 28, 1817. Except as the context otherwise requires, the Parent and its direct and indirect subsidiaries are collectively referred to in this report as the Company. Five Star Bank is referred to as Five Star Bank, FSB or the Bank, Scott Danahy Naylon, LLC is referred to as SDN and Courier Capital, LLC is referred to as Courier Capital. The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the Parent, the Bank, SDN and Courier Capital. The Parent's common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol FISI.

At December 31, 2017, the Company had consolidated total assets of \$4.11 billion, deposits of \$3.21 billion and shareholders' equity of \$381.2 million.

The Parent's primary business is the operation of its subsidiaries. It does not engage in any other substantial business activities. The Parent's three direct wholly-owned subsidiaries are: (1) the Bank, which provides a full range of banking services to consumer, commercial and municipal customers in Western and Central New York; (2) SDN, which sells various premium-based insurance policies on a commission basis to commercial and consumer customers; and (3) Courier Capital, which provides customized investment management, investment consulting and retirement plan services to individuals, businesses, institutions, foundations and retirement plans. At December 31, 2017, the Bank represented 99.1%, SDN represented 0.5% and Courier Capital represented 0.3% of the consolidated assets of the Company. Further discussion of our segments is included in Note 21 to the Company's Consolidated Financial Statements included under Item 8 of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

### **Five Star Bank**

The Bank is a New York chartered bank that has its headquarters at 55 North Main Street, Warsaw, NY, and a total of 53 full-service banking offices in the New York State counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wyoming and Yates counties.

At December 31, 2017, the Bank had total assets of \$4.07 billion, investment securities of \$1.04 billion, net loans of \$2.70 billion, deposits of \$3.22 billion and shareholders' equity of \$382.5 million, compared to total assets of \$3.68 billion, investment securities of \$1.08 billion, net loans of \$2.31 billion, deposits of \$3.01 billion and shareholders' equity of \$318.5 million at December 31, 2016. The Bank offers deposit products, which include checking and NOW accounts, savings accounts, and certificates of deposit, as its principal source of funding. The Bank's deposits are insured up to the maximum permitted by the Bank Insurance Fund (the Insurance Fund) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). The Bank offers a variety of loan products to its customers, including commercial and consumer loans and commercial and residential mortgage loans.

### **Scott Danahy Naylor, LLC**

Acquired in August 2014, SDN is a full-service insurance agency founded in 1923 and headquartered in Amherst, NY. SDN offers personal, commercial and financial services products and serves clients in 45 states. For the year ended December 31, 2017, SDN had total revenue of \$5.1 million, compared to total revenue of \$5.2 million for the year ended December 31, 2016.

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SDN's primary market area is Erie and Niagara counties in New York State. Most lines of personal insurance are provided, including automobile, homeowners, boat, recreational vehicle, landlord, and umbrella coverage. Commercial insurance products are also provided, consisting of property, liability, automobile, inland marine, workers compensation, bonds, crop and umbrella insurance. SDN also provides the following financial services products: life and disability insurance, Medicare supplements, long-term care, annuities, mutual funds, retirement programs and New York State disability.

### **Courier Capital, LLC**

Acquired in January 2016, Courier Capital is an SEC-registered investment advisory and wealth management firm founded in 1967 and based in Western New York, with offices in Buffalo, Amherst and Jamestown. With \$1.69 billion in assets under management, Courier Capital offers customized investment management, investment consulting and retirement plan services to individuals, businesses and institutions across nine states. For the year ended December 31, 2017, Courier Capital had total revenue of \$4.1 million, compared to total revenue of \$3.4 million for the period from date of acquisition through December 31, 2016.

In August 2017, Courier Capital acquired the assets of Robshaw & Julian Associates, Inc., a Buffalo-area registered investment adviser with approximately \$175 million assets under management, which increased Courier Capital's total assets under management to approximately \$1.6 billion.

### **Other Subsidiaries**

**Five Star REIT, Inc.** Five Star REIT, Inc. ( Five Star REIT ), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Bank, operates as a real estate investment trust that holds residential mortgages and commercial real estate loans. Five Star REIT provides additional flexibility and planning opportunities for the business of the Bank.

### **Business Strategy**

Our business strategy has been to maintain a community bank philosophy, which consists of focusing on and understanding the individualized banking and other financial services needs of individuals, municipalities and businesses of the local communities surrounding our primary service area. We believe this focus allows us to be more responsive to our customers' needs and provide a high level of personal service that differentiates us from larger competitors, resulting in long-standing and broad-based banking relationships. Our core customers are primarily small- to medium-sized businesses, individuals and community organizations who prefer to build banking, insurance and wealth management relationships with a community bank that offers and combines high quality, competitively-priced products and services with personalized service. Because of our identity and origin as a locally operated bank, we believe that our level of personal service provides a competitive advantage over larger banks, which tend to consolidate decision-making authority outside local communities.

A key aspect of our current business strategy is to foster a community-oriented culture where our customers and employees establish long-standing and mutually beneficial relationships. We believe that we are well-positioned to be a strong competitor within our market area because of our focus on community banking needs and customer service, our comprehensive suite of deposit, loan, insurance and wealth management products typically found at larger banks, our highly experienced management team and our strategically located banking centers. We have evolved to meet changing customer needs by opening what we refer to as financial solution center branches. These financial solution centers have a smaller footprint than our traditional branches, focus on technology to provide solutions that fit our customer preferences for transacting business with us, and these branches are staffed by certified personal bankers who are trained to meet a broad array of customer needs. In recent years, we have opened four financial solution

centers in the Rochester and Buffalo markets. We believe that the foregoing factors all help to grow our core deposits, which supports a central element of our business strategy - the growth of a diversified and high-quality loan portfolio.

**Acquisition Strategy**

We will continue to explore market expansion opportunities in or near our current market areas as opportunities arise. Our primary focus will be on increasing market share within existing markets, while taking advantage of potential growth opportunities within our insurance and wealth management lines of business by acquiring new businesses that can be added to existing operations. We believe our capital position remains strong enough to support an active merger and acquisition strategy, and expansion of our core financial service businesses of banking, insurance and wealth management. Consequently, we continue to explore acquisition opportunities in these activities. In evaluating acquisition opportunities, we will balance the potential for earnings accretion with maintaining adequate capital levels, which could result in our common stock being the predominate form of consideration and/or the need for us to raise capital.

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Conversations with potential strategic partners occur on a regular basis. The evaluation of any potential opportunity will favor a transaction that complements our core competencies and strategic intent, with a lesser emphasis being placed on geographic location or size. Additionally, we remain committed to maintaining a diversified revenue stream. Our senior management team has had extensive experience in acquisitions and post-acquisition integration of operations, and is prepared to act quickly should a potential opportunity arise, but will remain disciplined with its approach. We believe this experience positions us to successfully acquire and integrate additional financial services and banking businesses.

**MARKET AREAS AND COMPETITION**

We provide a wide range of banking and financial services to individuals, municipalities and businesses through a network of over 50 offices and an extensive ATM network throughout Western and Central New York. The region includes the counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wyoming and Yates counties. Our banking activities, though concentrated in the communities where we maintain branches, also extend into neighboring counties. In addition, we have expanded our consumer indirect lending presence to the Capital District of New York and Northern and Central Pennsylvania.

Our market area is economically diversified in that we serve both rural markets and the larger markets in and around Rochester and Buffalo. Rochester and Buffalo are the two largest metropolitan areas in New York outside of New York City, with a combined population of over two million people. We anticipate continuing to increase our presence in and around these metropolitan statistical areas in the coming years.

We face significant competition in both making loans and attracting deposits, as Western and Central New York have a high density of financial institutions. Our competition for loans comes principally from commercial banks, savings banks, savings and loan associations, mortgage banking companies, credit unions, insurance companies and other financial services companies. Our most direct competition for deposits has historically come from commercial banks, savings banks and credit unions. We face additional competition for deposits from non-depository competitors such as the mutual fund industry, securities and brokerage firms and insurance companies. We generally compete with other financial service providers on factors such as level of customer service, responsiveness to customer needs, availability and pricing of products, and geographic location. Our industry frequently experiences merger activity, which affects competition by eliminating some institutions while potentially strengthening the franchises of others.

The following table presents the Bank's market share percentage for total deposits as of June 30, 2017, in each county where we have operations. The table also indicates the ranking by deposit size in each market. All information in the table was obtained from S&P Global Market Intelligence, which compiles deposit data published by the FDIC as of June 30, 2017 and updates the information for any bank mergers and acquisitions completed subsequent to the reporting date.

<b>County</b>	<b>Market Share</b>	<b>Market Rank</b>	<b>Number of Branches <sup>(1)</sup></b>
Allegany	8.9%	3	1
Cattaraugus	29.8%	2	5
Cayuga	3.5%	10	1
Chautauqua	1.6%	8	1
Chemung	14.5%	3	3

Erie	0.4%	10	4
Genesee	21.8%	2	3
Livingston	37.5%	1	5
Monroe	1.7%	8	8
Ontario	13.8%	2	5
Orleans	23.8%	2	2
Seneca	28.3%	1	2
Steuben	31.8%	1	7
Wyoming	54.1%	1	4
Yates	42.3%	1	2

(1) Number of branches current as of December 31, 2017.

## INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

Our investment policy is contained within our overall Asset-Liability Management and Investment Policy. This policy dictates that investment decisions will be made based on the safety of the investment, liquidity requirements, potential returns, cash flow targets, need for collateral and desired risk parameters. In pursuing these objectives, we consider the ability of an investment to provide earnings consistent with factors related to quality, maturity, marketability, pledgeable nature and risk diversification. Our Treasurer, guided by our Asset-Liability Committee ( ALCO ), is responsible for investment portfolio decisions within the established policies.

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Our investment securities strategy is focused on providing liquidity to meet loan demand and redeeming liabilities, meeting pledging requirements, managing credit risks, managing overall interest rate risks and maximizing portfolio yield. Our current policy generally limits security purchases to the following:

U.S. treasury securities;

U.S. government agency securities, which are securities issued by official Federal government bodies (e.g., the Government National Mortgage Association ( GNMA ) and the Small Business Administration ( SBA )), and U.S. government-sponsored enterprise securities, which are securities issued by independent organizations that are in part sponsored by the federal government (e.g., the Federal Home Loan Bank ( FHLB ) system, the Federal National Mortgage Association ( FNMA ), the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation ( FHLMC ) and the Federal Farm Credit Bureau);

Mortgage-backed securities ( MBS ), which include mortgage-backed pass-through securities, collateralized mortgage obligations and multi-family MBS issued by GNMA, FNMA and FHLMC;

Investment grade municipal securities, including revenue, tax and bond anticipation notes, statutory installment notes and general obligation bonds;

Certain creditworthy unrated securities issued by municipalities;

Certificates of deposit;

Equity securities at the holding company level; and

Limited partnership investments.

## **LENDING ACTIVITIES**

### **General**

We offer a broad range of loans including commercial business and revolving lines of credit, commercial mortgages, equipment loans, residential mortgage loans and home equity loans and lines of credit, home improvement loans, automobile loans and personal loans. Newly originated and refinanced fixed rate residential mortgage loans are either retained in our portfolio or sold to the secondary market with servicing rights retained.

We continually evaluate and update our lending policy. The key elements of our lending philosophy include the following:

To ensure consistent underwriting, employees must share a common view of the risks inherent in lending activities as well as the standards to be applied in underwriting and managing credit risk;

Pricing of credit products should be risk-based;

The loan portfolio must be diversified to limit the potential impact of negative events; and

Careful, timely exposure monitoring through dynamic use of our risk rating system is required to provide early warning and assure proactive management of potential problems.

### **Commercial Business and Commercial Mortgage Lending**

We primarily originate commercial business loans in our market areas and underwrite them based on the borrower's ability to service the loan from operating income. We offer a broad range of commercial lending products, including term loans and lines of credit. Short and medium-term commercial loans, primarily collateralized, are made available to businesses for working capital (including inventory and receivables), business expansion (including acquisition of real estate, expansion and improvements) and the purchase of equipment. We offer commercial business loans to customers in the agricultural industry for short-term crop production, farm equipment and livestock financing. As a general practice, where possible, a first position collateral lien is placed on any available real estate, equipment or other assets owned by the borrower and a personal guarantee of the owner is obtained. As of December 31, 2017, \$122.4 million, or 27%, of our aggregate commercial business loan portfolio were at fixed rates, while \$327.9 million, or 73%, were at variable rates.

We also offer commercial mortgage loans to finance the purchase of real property, which generally consists of real estate with completed structures and, to a smaller extent, agricultural real estate financing. Commercial mortgage loans are secured by first liens on the real estate and are typically amortized over a 10 to 20 year period. The underwriting analysis includes credit verification, appraisals and a review of the borrower's financial condition and repayment capacity. As of December 31, 2017, \$348.7 million, or 43%, of the loans in our aggregate commercial mortgage portfolio were at fixed rates, while \$460.2 million, or 57%, were at variable rates.

We utilize government loan guarantee programs where available and appropriate.

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We participate in government loan guarantee programs offered by the SBA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Economic and Community Development and Farm Service Agency, among others. As of December 31, 2017, we had loans with an aggregate principal balance of \$47.8 million that were covered by guarantees under these programs. The guarantees typically only cover a certain percentage of these loans. By participating in these programs, we are able to broaden our base of borrowers while minimizing credit risk.

**Residential Real Estate Lending**

We originate fixed and variable rate one-to-four family residential mortgages collateralized by owner-occupied properties located in our market areas. We offer a variety of real estate loan products, including home improvement loans, closed-end home equity loans, and home equity lines of credit, which are generally amortized over periods of up to 30 years. Loans collateralized by one-to-four family residential real estate generally have been originated in amounts of no more than 80% of appraised value, or have mortgage insurance. Mortgage title insurance and hazard insurance are normally required. We sell certain one-to-four family residential mortgages to the secondary mortgage market and typically retain the right to service the mortgages. To assure maximum salability of the residential loan products for possible resale, we typically follow the underwriting and appraisal guidelines of the secondary market, including the FHLMC and the Federal Housing Administration, and service the loans in a manner that satisfies the secondary market agreements. As of December 31, 2017, our residential mortgage servicing portfolio totaled \$163.3 million, the majority of which has been sold to the FHLMC. As of December 31, 2017, our residential real estate loan portfolio totaled \$465.3 million, or 17% of our total loan portfolio. As of December 31, 2017, our residential real estate lines portfolio totaled \$116.3 million, or 4% of our total loan portfolio. As of December 31, 2017, \$417.4 million, or 90%, of the loans in our residential real estate loan portfolio were at fixed rates, while \$47.9 million, or 10%, were at variable rates. The residential real estate lines portfolio primarily consists of variable rate lines. Approximately 88% of the loans and lines in our residential real estate portfolios were in first lien positions at December 31, 2017. We do not engage in sub-prime or other high-risk residential mortgage lending as a line-of-business.

**Consumer Lending**

We offer a variety of loan products to our consumer customers, including automobile loans, secured installment loans and other types of secured and unsecured personal loans. At December 31, 2017, outstanding consumer loan balances were concentrated in indirect automobile loans.

We originate indirect consumer loans for a mix of new and used vehicles through franchised new car dealers. The consumer indirect loan portfolio is primarily comprised of loans with terms that typically range from 36 to 84 months. We have developed relationships with franchised new car dealers in Western, Central and the Capital District of New York, and Northern and Central Pennsylvania. As of December 31, 2017, our consumer indirect portfolio totaled \$876.6 million, or 32% of our total loan portfolio. The consumer indirect loan portfolio primarily consists of fixed rate loans with relatively short durations.

We also originate, independently of the indirect loans described above, consumer automobile loans, recreational vehicle loans, boat loans, personal loans (collateralized and uncollateralized) and deposit account collateralized loans. The terms of these loans typically range from 12 to 60 months and vary based upon the nature of the collateral and the size of loan. The majority of the consumer lending program is underwritten on a secured basis using the customer's financed automobile, mobile home, boat or recreational vehicle as collateral. The other loans in our consumer portfolio totaled \$17.6 million as of December 31, 2017, all but \$753 thousand of which were fixed rate loans.

## **Credit Administration**

Our loan policy establishes standardized underwriting guidelines, as well as the loan approval process and the committee structures necessary to facilitate and ensure the highest possible loan quality decision-making in a timely and businesslike manner. The policy establishes requirements for extending credit based on the size, risk rating and type of credit involved. The policy also sets limits on individual lending authority and various forms of joint lending authority, while designating which loans are required to be approved at the committee level.

Our credit objectives are to:

- Compete effectively and service the legitimate credit needs of our target market;
- Enhance our reputation for superior quality and timely delivery of products and services;
- Provide pricing that reflects the entire relationship and is commensurate with the risk profiles of our borrowers;
- Retain, develop and acquire profitable, multi-product, value added relationships with high quality borrowers;
- Focus on government guaranteed lending to meet the needs of the small businesses in our communities; and
- Comply with all relevant laws and regulations.

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Our policy includes loan reviews, under the supervision of our Audit and Risk Oversight committees of the Board of Directors and directed by our Chief Risk Officer, in order to render an independent and objective evaluation of our asset quality and credit administration process.

We assign risk ratings to loans in the commercial business and commercial mortgage portfolios. We use those risk ratings to:

- Profile the risk and exposure in the loan portfolio and identify developing trends and relative levels of risk;
- Identify deteriorating credits;
- Reflect the probability that a given customer may default on its obligations; and
- Assist with risk-based pricing.

Through the loan approval process, loan administration and loan review program, management seeks to continuously monitor our credit risk profile and assess the overall quality of the loan portfolio and adequacy of the allowance for loan losses.

We have several procedures in place to assist in maintaining the overall quality of our loan portfolio. Delinquent loan reports are monitored by credit administration to identify adverse levels and trends. Loans, including impaired loans, are generally classified as non-accruing if they are past due as to maturity or payment of principal or interest for a period of more than 90 days, unless such loans are well-collateralized and in the process of collection. Loans that are on a current payment status or past due less than 90 days may also be classified as non-accruing if repayment in full of principal and/or interest is uncertain.

## **Allowance for Loan Losses**

The allowance for loan losses is established through charges to earnings in the form of a provision for loan losses. The allowance reflects management's estimate of the amount of probable loan losses in the portfolio, based on factors including, but not limited to:

- Specific allocations for individually analyzed credits;
- Risk assessment process;
- Historical net charge-off experience;
- Evaluation of loss emergence and look-back periods;

- Evaluation of the loan portfolio with loan reviews;
- Levels and trends in delinquent and non-accruing loans;
- Trends in volume and terms of loans;
- Effects of changes in lending policy;
- Experience, ability and depth of management;
- National and local economic trends and conditions;
- Concentrations of credit;
- Interest rate environment;
- Regulatory environment;
- Information (availability of timely financial information); and
- Collateral values.

Our methodology for estimating the allowance for loan losses includes the following:

1. Impaired commercial business and commercial mortgage loans are typically reviewed individually and assigned a specific loss allowance, if considered necessary, in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles ( GAAP ).
2. The remaining portfolios of commercial business and commercial mortgage loans are segmented by risk rating into the following loan classification categories: uncriticized or pass, special mention, substandard and doubtful. Uncriticized loans, special mention loans, substandard loans and all doubtful loans not assigned a specific loss allowance are assigned allowance allocations based on historical net loan charge-off experience for each of the respective loan categories, supplemented with loss emergence periods and qualitative factors, if considered necessary. These qualitative factors include the levels and trends in delinquent and non-accruing loans, trends in volume and terms of loans, effects of changes in lending policy, experience, ability, and depth of management, national and local economic trends and conditions, concentrations of credit, interest rate environment, regulatory environment, information (availability of timely financial information), and collateral values, among others.

3. The retail loan portfolio is segmented into the following types of loans: residential real estate loans, residential real estate lines, consumer indirect and other consumer. Allowance allocations for the retail loan portfolio are based on the average loss experience for the previous eight quarters, supplemented with loss emergence periods and qualitative factors similar to the elements described above.

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Management presents a quarterly review of the adequacy of the allowance for loan losses to the Audit Committee of our Board of Directors based on the methodology described above. See also the section titled "Allowance for Loan Losses" in Part II, Item 7, "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

## **SOURCES OF FUNDS**

Our primary sources of funds are deposits and borrowed funds.

### **Deposits**

We maintain a full range of deposit products and accounts to meet the needs of the residents and businesses in our primary service area. Products include an array of checking and savings account programs for individuals and businesses, including money market accounts, certificates of deposit, sweep investment capabilities as well as Individual Retirement Accounts and other qualified plan accounts. We rely primarily on competitive pricing of our deposit products, customer service and long-standing relationships with customers to attract and retain these deposits and seek to make our services convenient to the community by offering a choice of several delivery systems and channels, including telephone, mail, online, automated teller machines (ATMs), debit cards, point-of-sale transactions, automated clearing house transactions (ACH), remote deposit, and mobile banking via telephone or wireless devices. We also take advantage of the use of technology by offering business customers banking access via the Internet and various advanced cash management systems.

We had no traditional brokered deposits at December 31, 2017; however, we do participate in the Certificate of Deposit Account Registry Service ( CDARS ) and Insured Cash Sweep ( ICS ) programs, which enable depositors to receive FDIC insurance coverage for deposits otherwise exceeding the maximum insurable amount. Through these programs, deposits in excess of the maximum insurable amount are placed with multiple participating financial institutions. Reciprocal CDARS deposits and ICS deposits totaled \$159.2 million and \$147.3 million, respectively, at December 31, 2017.

### **Borrowings**

We have access to a variety of borrowing sources and use both short-term and long-term borrowings to support our asset base. Borrowings from time-to-time include federal funds purchased, securities sold under agreements to repurchase, FHLB advances and borrowings from the discount window of the FRB, as defined below.

Other sources of funds include scheduled amortization and prepayments of principal from loans and mortgage-backed securities, maturities and calls of investment securities and funds provided by operations

## **OPERATING SEGMENTS**

We have two reportable segments: Banking and Non-Banking. These reportable segments have been identified and organized based on the nature of the underlying products and services applicable to each segment, the type of customers to whom those products and services are offered and the distribution channel through which those products and services are made available.

The Banking segment includes all of the Company's retail and commercial banking operations. The Non-Banking segment includes the activities of SDN, a full service insurance agency that provides a broad range of insurance services to both personal and business clients, and Courier Capital, an investment advisor and wealth management

firm that provides customized investment management, investment consulting and retirement plan services to individuals, businesses, institutions, foundations and retirement plans.

For a discussion of the segments included in our principal activities and certain financial information for each segment, see Note 21, Segment Reporting, of the notes to consolidated financial statements included in this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

#### **OTHER INFORMATION**

We also make available, free of charge, through our website, all reports filed with, or furnished to, the SEC, including our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and Current Reports on Form 8-K, as well as any amendments to those reports, as soon as reasonably practicable after those documents are filed with, or furnished to, the SEC. These filings may be viewed by accessing the *SEC Filings* subsection of the *Financials* section of our website ([www.fiiwarsaw.com](http://www.fiiwarsaw.com)). Information available on our website is not a part of, and is not incorporated into, this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

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All of the reports we file with the SEC, including this Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and Current Reports on Form 8-K, as well as any amendments thereto may be accessed at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov) or at the public reference facility maintained by the SEC at its public reference room at 100 F. Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, DC 20549 and copies of all or any part thereof may be obtained from that office upon payment of the prescribed fees. You may call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference room and you can request copies of the documents upon payment of a duplicating fee, by writing to the SEC.

## **SUPERVISION AND REGULATION**

We are subject to extensive regulation under federal and state laws. The regulatory framework is intended primarily for the protection of depositors, federal deposit insurance funds and the banking system as a whole and not for the protection of shareholders and creditors.

We are also subject to the disclosure and regulatory requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, as administered by the Securities and Exchange Commission ( SEC ). Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market ( NASDAQ ) under the trading symbol FISI and is subject to NASDAQ rules for listed companies.

Significant elements of the laws and regulations applicable to the Company are described below. The description is qualified in its entirety by reference to the full text of the statutes, regulations and policies that are described. Also, such statutes, regulations and policies are continually under review by Congress, state legislatures, and federal and state regulatory agencies. A change in statutes, regulations or regulatory policies applicable to the Company could have a material effect on the business, financial condition and results of operations of the Company.

**Holding Company Regulation.** We are subject to comprehensive regulation by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, frequently referred to as the Federal Reserve Board ( FRB or Federal Reserve ), under the Bank Holding Company Act (the BHC Act ), as amended by, among other laws, the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999 (the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act ), and by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the Dodd-Frank Act ), enacted in 2010. We are registered with the Federal Reserve as a bank holding company ( BHC ). We must file reports with the FRB and such additional information as the FRB may require, and our holding company and non-banking affiliates are subject to examination by the FRB. Under FRB policy, a bank holding company must serve as a source of strength for its subsidiary banks. Under this policy, the FRB may require, and has required in the past, a holding company to contribute additional capital to an undercapitalized subsidiary bank. The BHC Act provides that a bank holding company must obtain FRB approval before:

- Acquiring, directly or indirectly, ownership or control of any voting shares of another bank or bank holding company if, after such acquisition, it would own or control more than 5% of such shares (unless it already owns or controls the majority of such shares);
- Acquiring all or substantially all of the assets of another bank or bank holding company, or
- Merging or consolidating with another bank holding company.

The BHC Act generally prohibits a bank holding company from acquiring direct or indirect ownership or control of more than 5% of the voting shares of any company which is not a bank or bank holding company, or from engaging directly or indirectly in activities other than those of banking, managing or controlling banks, or providing services for its subsidiaries. The principal exceptions to these prohibitions involve certain non-bank activities which, by statute or by FRB regulation or order, have been identified as activities closely related to the business of banking or managing or controlling banks. The list of activities permitted by the FRB includes, among other things: lending; operating a savings institution, mortgage company, finance company, credit card company or factoring company; performing certain data processing operations; providing certain investment and financial advice; underwriting and acting as an insurance agent for certain types of credit related insurance; leasing property on a full-payout, non-operating basis; selling money orders, travelers checks and United States Savings Bonds; real estate and personal property appraising; providing tax planning and preparation services; and, subject to certain limitations, providing securities brokerage services for customers. These activities may also be affected by federal legislation.

The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act amended portions of the BHC Act to authorize bank holding companies, such as us, directly or through non-bank subsidiaries to engage in securities, insurance and other activities that are financial in nature or incidental to a financial activity. In order to undertake these activities, a bank holding company must become a financial holding company by submitting to the appropriate Federal Reserve Bank a declaration that the company elects to be a financial holding company and a certification that all of the depository institutions controlled by the company are well capitalized and well managed.

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**The Dodd-Frank Act.** The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the Dodd-Frank Act ) significantly changed the regulation of financial institutions and the financial services industry. The Dodd-Frank Act includes provisions affecting large and small financial institutions alike, including several provisions that will profoundly affect how community banks, thrifts, and small bank and thrift holding companies will be regulated in the future. Among other things, these provisions abolished the Office of Thrift Supervision and transferred its functions to the other federal banking agencies, relaxed rules regarding interstate branching, allowed financial institutions to pay interest on business checking accounts, and imposed new capital requirements on bank and thrift holding companies. The Dodd-Frank Act also includes several corporate governance provisions that apply to all public companies, not just financial institutions. These include provisions mandating certain disclosures regarding executive compensation and provisions addressing proxy access by shareholders. We have elected to be treated as a financial holding company.

The Dodd-Frank Act contains numerous other provisions affecting financial institutions of all types, including some that may affect our business in substantial and unpredictable ways. We have incurred higher operating costs in complying with the Dodd-Frank Act, and we expect that these higher costs will continue for the foreseeable future. Our management continues to monitor the ongoing implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act and as new regulations are issued, will assess their effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

On February 3, 2017, President Donald J. Trump issued an executive order directing the Secretary of the Treasury to report, within 120 days, on whether current governmental rules and policies either promote or inhibit the Core Principles for Financial Regulation as defined in the executive order (the Executive Order ). The Treasury Department has since issued multiple reports in response to the Executive Order, the first of which, issued on June 12, 2017, analyzed and made recommendations with respect to the U.S. banking system (the Treasury Report ). In particular, the Treasury Report recommended several actions that would ease the requirements of the Dodd-Frank Act on community banks such as us, as described in greater detail below. While some of these actions may be implemented unilaterally by our regulators, others will require legislation in order to be put into effect.

On June 8, 2017, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Financial CHOICE Act of 2017 (the Financial CHOICE Act ), a bill that, if enacted into law, would repeal or modify key provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act, including elimination of the Volcker Rule, as defined below, and making the director of the CFPB, also defined below, subject to removal by the President. President Trump has indicated that he would sign the Financial CHOICE Act but the U.S. Senate has yet to take up that bill. In early March 2018, the Senate instead opened debate on the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, a bill that would also impact several of the provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act and that appears to enjoy significant bipartisan support.

We cannot predict how closely a final bill, if any, will resemble either the one passed by the House of Representatives last year or the one currently under debate in the Senate. Similarly, it is too early for us to predict whether any other executive or congressional action will attempt to implement the recommendations of the Treasury Report as they pertain to the Dodd-Frank Act.

See Item 1A, Risk Factors, for a more extensive discussion of this topic.

**The Volcker Rule.** The Dodd-Frank Act prohibits banks and their affiliates from engaging in proprietary trading and from investing and sponsoring hedge funds and private equity funds. The statutory provision implementing these restrictions is commonly called the Volcker Rule. To implement the Volcker Rule, federal regulators issued final rules in December 2013 that were to become effective April 2014. The Federal Reserve subsequently issued an order extending the period that institutions have to conform their activities to the requirements of the Volcker Rule to July 21, 2015, and extended the compliance date for banks to conform their investments in certain legacy covered funds until July 21, 2016. These final rules exempt the Bank, as a bank with less than \$10 billion in total consolidated

assets that does not engage in any covered activities other than trading in certain government, agency, state or municipal obligations, from any significant compliance obligations under the Volcker Rule; therefore, the Volcker Rule will not have a material effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. We cannot predict whether the Volcker Rule will be repealed by enactment of the Financial CHOICE Act, or modified by implementation of some or all of the relevant recommendations included in the Treasury Report.

**Depository Institution Regulation.** The Bank is subject to regulation by the FDIC. This regulatory structure includes:

- Real estate lending standards, which provide guidelines concerning loan-to-value ratios for various types of real estate loans;
- Risk-based capital rules, including accounting for interest rate risk, concentration of credit risk and the risks posed by non-traditional activities;
- Rules requiring depository institutions to develop and implement internal procedures to evaluate and control credit and settlement exposure to their correspondent banks;
- Rules restricting types and amounts of equity investments; and
- Rules addressing various safety and soundness issues, including operations and managerial standards, standards for asset quality, earnings and compensation standards.

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**Capital Requirements.** The Company and the Bank are each required to comply with applicable capital adequacy standards established by the Federal Reserve. The current risk-based capital standards applicable to the Company and the Bank, parts of which are currently in the process of being phased in, are based on the final capital framework for strengthening international capital standards, known as Basel III, of the Basel Committee.

Prior to January 1, 2015, the risk-based capital standards applicable to the Company and the Bank (the General Risk-based Capital Rules ) were based on the 1988 Capital Accord, known as Basel I, of the Basel Committee. In July 2013, the federal bank regulators approved the final Basel III Rules implementing the Basel III framework as well as certain provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act. The Basel III Rules substantially revised the risk-based capital requirements applicable to BHCs and their depository institution subsidiaries, including the Company and the Bank, as compared to the General Risk-based Capital Rules. The Basel III Rules became effective for the Company and the Bank on January 1, 2015 (subject to a phase-in period for certain provisions).

The Basel III Rules, among other things, (i) introduce a new capital measure called CET1, which consists primarily of retained earnings and common stock, (ii) specify that Tier 1 capital consists of CET1 and Additional Tier 1 capital instruments, such as preferred stock and certain convertible securities, meeting certain revised requirements, (iii) define CET1 narrowly by requiring that most deductions/adjustments to regulatory capital measures be made to CET1 and not to the other components of capital, and (iv) expand the scope of the deductions/adjustments to capital as compared to existing regulations.

Under the Basel III Rules, the minimum capital ratios effective as of January 1, 2015 are:

- 4.5% CET1 to risk-weighted assets;
- 6.0% Tier 1 capital (that is, CET1 plus Additional Tier 1 capital) to risk-weighted assets; and
- 8.0% Total capital (that is, Tier 1 capital plus Tier 2 capital) to risk-weighted assets.

The Basel III Rules also introduce a new capital conservation buffer designed to absorb losses during periods of economic stress. The capital conservation buffer is an amount in addition to these minimum risk-based capital ratio requirements. The Basel III Rules also provide for a countercyclical capital buffer applicable only to certain covered institutions. We do not expect the countercyclical capital buffer to be applicable to the Company or the Bank. Banking institutions that do not hold capital above the required minimum levels, including the capital conservation buffer, will face constraints on dividends and compensation based on the amount of the shortfall.

When fully phased in on January 1, 2019, the Basel III Rules will require the Company and the Bank to maintain an additional capital conservation buffer of 2.5% of risk-weighted assets, effectively resulting in minimum ratios of (i) CET1 to risk-weighted assets of at least 7%, (ii) Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets of at least 8.5%, and (iii) Total capital to risk-weighted assets of at least 10.5%.

The Basel III Rules also provide for a number of deductions from and adjustments to CET1. These include, for example, the requirement that MSRs, certain deferred tax assets and significant investments in non-consolidated financial entities be deducted from CET1 to the extent that any one such category exceeds 10% of CET1 or all such items, in the aggregate, exceed 15% of CET1.

Implementation of the deductions and other adjustments to CET1 began on January 1, 2015 and will be phased in over a 4-year period (beginning at 40% on January 1, 2015 and an additional 20% per year thereafter). The implementation of the capital conservation buffer began on January 1, 2016 at the 0.625% level and will be phased in over a 4-year period (increasing by that amount on each subsequent January 1, until it reaches 2.5% on January 1, 2019).

The Basel III Rules prescribe a new standardized approach for risk weightings that expands the risk-weighting categories from the four Basel I-derived categories (0%, 20%, 50% and 100%) to a much larger and more risk-sensitive number of categories, depending on the nature of the assets, generally ranging from 0% for U.S. government and agency securities, to 600% for certain equity exposures, and resulting in higher risk weights for a variety of asset classes.

The recommendations of the Treasury Report include making community banks such as us exempt from the risk-based capital standards included under the Basel III Rules. As no meaningful action has yet been taken to implement these recommendations, we cannot predict whether or to what extent we will continue to be subject to these standards in the future, including on the final phase-in date of January 1, 2019.

**Leverage Requirements.** BHCs and banks are also required to comply with minimum leverage ratio requirements. These requirements provide for a minimum ratio of Tier 1 capital to total consolidated quarterly average assets (as defined for regulatory purposes), net of the loan loss reserve, goodwill and certain other intangible assets (the leverage ratio ), of 4.0%.

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**Liquidity Regulation.** During 2014, the U.S. banking agencies adopted final rules implementing one of the two new standards provided for in the Basel III liquidity framework - its liquidity coverage ratio ( LCR ), which is designed to ensure that a bank maintains an adequate level of unencumbered high quality liquid assets equal to the bank's expected net cash outflows for a thirty-day time horizon under an acute liquidity stress scenario. The rules as adopted apply in their most comprehensive form only to advanced approaches bank holding companies and depository institution subsidiaries of such bank holding companies and, in a modified form, to banking organizations having \$50 billion or more in total consolidated assets. Accordingly, they do not apply to either the Company or the Bank. As a result, we do not manage our balance sheet to be compliant with these rules.

The Basel III framework also included a second standard, referred to as the net stable funding ratio ( NSFR ), which is designed to promote more medium-and long-term funding of the assets and activities of banks over a one-year time horizon. Although the Basel Committee finalized its formulation of the NSFR in 2014, the U.S. banking agencies have not yet proposed an NSFR for application to U.S. banking organizations or addressed the scope of banking organizations to which it will apply. The Basel Committee's final NSFR document states that the NSFR applies to internationally active banks, as did its final LCR document as to that ratio.

**Prompt Corrective Action.** The Federal Deposit Insurance Act, as amended ( FDIA ), requires among other things, the federal banking agencies to take prompt corrective action in respect of depository institutions that do not meet minimum capital requirements. The FDIA establishes five capital categories for FDIC-insured banks: well capitalized, adequately capitalized, under-capitalized, significantly under-capitalized and critically under-capitalized. Under rules in effect through December 31, 2014, a depository institution is deemed to be well-capitalized if the institution has a total risk-based capital ratio of 10.0% or greater, a Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio of 6.0% or greater, and a leverage ratio of 5.0% or greater, and the institution is not subject to an order, written agreement, capital directive or prompt corrective action directive to meet and maintain a specific level for any capital measure. As of January 1, 2015, the standards for well-capitalized status under prompt corrective action regulations changed by, among other things, introducing a CET 1 ratio requirement of 6.5% and increasing the Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio requirement from 6.0% to 8.0%. The total risk-based capital ratio and Tier 1 leverage ratio requirements remain at 10.0% and 5.0%, respectively.

The FDIA imposes progressively more restrictive constraints on operations, management and capital distributions, depending on the capital category in which an institution is classified. The current capital rule established by the federal bank regulators, discussed above under Capital Requirements, amend the prompt corrective action requirements in certain respects, including adding a CET1 risk-based capital ratio as one of the metrics (with a minimum 6.5% ratio for well-capitalized status) and increasing the Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio required for each of the five capital categories, including an increase from 6.0% to 8.0% to be well-capitalized.

For further information regarding the capital ratios and leverage ratio of the Company and the Bank see the section titled Capital Resources in Part II, Item 7, Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, included in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. The current requirements and the actual levels for the Company and the Bank are detailed in Note 11, Regulatory Matters, of the notes to consolidated financial statements, included in this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

**Dividends.** The FRB policy is that a bank holding company should pay cash dividends only to the extent that its net income for the past year is sufficient to cover both the cash dividends and a rate of earnings retention that is consistent with the holding company's capital needs, asset quality and overall financial condition, and that it is inappropriate for a bank holding company experiencing serious financial problems to borrow funds to pay dividends. Furthermore, a bank that is classified under the prompt corrective action regulations as undercapitalized will be prohibited from paying any dividends.

The primary source of cash for dividends we pay is the dividends we receive from the Bank. The Bank is subject to various regulatory policies and requirements relating to the payment of dividends, including requirements to maintain capital above regulatory minimums. Approval of the New York State Department of Financial Services (the NY DFS ) is required prior to paying a dividend if the dividend declared by the Bank exceeds the sum of the Bank's net profits for that year and its retained net profits for the preceding two calendar years. At January 1, 2018, the Bank could declare dividends of \$42.1 million from retained net profits of the preceding two years. The Bank declared dividends of \$12.0 million in 2017 and \$16.0 million in 2016.

**Federal Deposit Insurance Assessments.** The Bank is a member of the FDIC and pays an insurance premium to the FDIC based upon its assessable assets on a quarterly basis. Deposits are insured up to applicable limits by the FDIC and such insurance is backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government.

Under the Dodd-Frank Act, a permanent increase in deposit insurance was authorized to \$250,000. The coverage limit is per depositor, per insured depository institution for each account ownership category.

The Dodd-Frank Act also set a new minimum Deposit Insurance Fund ( DIF ) reserve ratio at 1.35% of estimated insured deposits. The FDIC is required to attain this ratio by September 30, 2020. The Dodd-Frank Act also required the FDIC to define the deposit insurance assessment base for an insured depository institution as an amount equal to the institution's average consolidated total assets during the assessment period minus average tangible equity. Premiums for the Bank are now calculated based upon the average balance of total assets minus average tangible equity as of the close of business for each day during the calendar quarter.

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The FDIC has the flexibility to adopt actual rates that are higher or lower than the total base assessment rates adopted without notice and comment, if certain conditions are met.

DIF-insured institutions pay a Financing Corporation ( FICO ) assessment in order to fund the interest on bonds issued in the 1980s in connection with the failures in the thrift industry. For the fourth quarter of 2017, the FICO assessment was equal to 0.46 basis points (annualized) computed on assets as required by the Dodd-Frank Act. These assessments will continue until the bonds mature in 2019.

The FDIC is authorized to conduct examinations of and require reporting by FDIC-insured institutions. It is also authorized to terminate a depository bank's deposit insurance upon a finding by the FDIC that the bank's financial condition is unsafe or unsound or that the institution has engaged in unsafe or unsound practices or has violated any applicable rule, regulation, order or condition enacted or imposed by the bank's regulatory agency. The termination of deposit insurance for the Bank would have a material adverse effect on our earnings, operations and financial condition.

**Consumer Laws and Regulations.** In addition to the laws and regulations discussed herein, the Bank is also subject to certain consumer federal and state laws and regulations that are designed to protect consumers in transactions with banks. While the list set forth herein is not exhaustive, these laws and regulations include, among others, the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Truth in Lending Act, the Truth in Savings Act, the Electronic Funds Transfer Act, the Expedited Funds Availability Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, the Service Members Civil Relief Act and these laws' respective state-law counterparts, as well as state usury laws and laws regarding unfair and deceptive acts and practices. These and other federal and state laws, among other things, require disclosures of the cost of credit and terms of deposit accounts, provide substantive consumer rights, prohibit discrimination in credit transactions, regulate the use of credit report information, provide financial privacy protections, prohibit unfair, deceptive and abusive practices, restrict the Company's ability to raise interest rates and subject the Company to substantial regulatory oversight. Violations of applicable consumer protection laws can result in significant potential liability from litigation brought by customers, including actual damages, restitution and attorneys' fees. Federal and state bank regulators, federal law enforcement agencies, state attorneys general and state and local consumer protection agencies may also seek to enforce consumer protection requirements and obtain these and other remedies, including regulatory sanctions, customer rescission rights, fines and civil money penalties. Failure to comply with consumer protection requirements may also result in our failure to obtain any required bank regulatory approval for merger or acquisition transactions the Company may wish to pursue or our prohibition from engaging in such transactions even if approval is not required.

The Dodd-Frank Act centralized responsibility for consumer financial protection by creating the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau ( CFPB ), and giving it responsibility for implementing, examining and enforcing compliance with federal consumer protection laws. The CFPB focuses on:

- Risks to consumers and compliance with the federal consumer financial laws, when it evaluates the policies and practices of a financial institution;
- The markets in which firms operate and risks to consumers posed by activities in those markets;
- Depository institutions that offer a wide variety of consumer financial products and services; depository institutions with a more specialized focus; and
- Non-depository companies that offer one or more consumer financial products or services.

The CFPB has broad rulemaking authority for a wide range of consumer financial laws that apply to all banks, including, among other things, the authority to prohibit unfair, deceptive or abusive acts and practices. Abusive acts or practices are defined as those that materially interfere with a consumer's ability to understand a term or condition of a consumer financial product or service or take unreasonable advantage of a consumer's (i) lack of financial savvy, (ii) inability to protect himself in the selection or use of consumer financial products or services, or (iii) reasonable reliance on a covered entity to act in the consumer's interests. The CFPB can issue cease-and-desist orders against banks and other entities that violate consumer financial laws. The CFPB may also institute a civil action against an entity in violation of federal consumer financial law in order to impose a civil penalty or injunction. The CFPB has examination and enforcement authority over all banks with more than \$10 billion in assets, as well as their affiliates.

Neither the recommendations of the Treasury Report nor the Financial CHOICE Act provide for the abolishment of the CFPB; both, however, call for the director of the CFPB to be subject to removal by the President and for repeal of the CFPB's authority to perform examinations. We cannot predict whether or how the CFPB will be impacted by either pending or future legislation or by possible future executive action.

Banking regulators take into account compliance with consumer protection laws when considering approval of a proposed transaction.

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**Community Reinvestment Act.** Pursuant to the Community Reinvestment Act (the CRA), under federal and New York State law, the Bank is obligated, consistent with safe and sound banking practices, to help meet the credit needs of its entire community, including low and moderate income neighborhoods. The FRB of New York and NY DFS periodically assess the Bank's record of performance under the CRA and issue one of the following ratings: Outstanding, Satisfactory, Needs to Improve, or Substantial Noncompliance.

The most recently completed evaluation of the Bank's performance under the CRA was conducted by the FRB of New York for the time period January 2011 through September 2013 and was disclosed to us in March 2018. This performance evaluation resulted in an overall rating by the FRB of New York of Needs to Improve. In reaching this rating the FRB of New York considered several factors, including the geographic distribution of loans we made from January 2011 through September 2013 in the Buffalo and Rochester metropolitan areas, the accessibility of our retail delivery systems and our level of compliance during the time period with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and the Fair Housing Act. We believe the Bank has made significant improvements in these areas since September 2013 and we are firmly committed to fair and responsible banking and helping to meet the credit needs of all segments of the communities that we serve.

The FRB of New York's evaluation of the Bank's January 2011 through September 2013 CRA performance may subject the Bank to enhanced scrutiny in any application it files with the FRB of New York or the NY DFS with respect to, among other things, the establishment of new branches, the expansion or relocation of existing branches, or the acquisition by the Bank of another depository institution. While the approval or denial of such an application is typically a facts and circumstances based determination, a less than satisfactory CRA rating would be one of the factors our regulators will consider in their review.

We are in the process of preparing our response to the performance evaluation issued by the FRB of New York and we plan to file a Current Report on Form 8-K when our response and the performance evaluation are publicly available.

In January 2015, we signed an Assurance of Discontinuance (AOD) with the NYS Attorney General's office related to an investigation into lending practices for minority residents within the City of Rochester from 2009 to June 2013. As part of the agreement, we paid NYS \$150 thousand to cover its costs. An additional \$750 thousand in dedicated funds spread over three-years was earmarked for ongoing business efforts consistent with the Bank's growth initiatives in the Rochester market, and throughout Monroe County, including efforts focused on marketing to minority communities, as well as lending discounts and/or subsidies. The Bank successfully met all requirements of the AOD and in January 2018, the AOD expired by its terms.

The NY DFS is assessing our CRA performance since 2012 and has not yet completed its evaluation. The last CRA evaluation completed by the NY DFS was in 2011 and resulted in the Bank being rated as Outstanding.

**Privacy Rules.** Federal banking regulators, as required under the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, have adopted rules limiting the ability of banks and other financial institutions to disclose nonpublic information about consumers to non-affiliated third parties. The rules require disclosure of privacy policies to consumers and, in some circumstances, allow consumers to prevent disclosure of certain personal information to non-affiliated third parties. The privacy provisions of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act affect how consumer information is transmitted through diversified financial services companies and conveyed to outside vendors.

In February 2017, the NY DFS issued a final rule, which became effective on March 1, 2017, requiring New York State-chartered or licensed banks regulated by the NY DFS, such as us, to adopt broad cybersecurity protections. Specifically, we are now required to establish a program designed to ensure the safety of our information systems,

adopt a written cybersecurity policy, designate an information security officer, and comply with NY DFS certification and reporting requirements. Compliance with this rule is subject to four phase-in dates between September 2017 and March 2019.

**Anti-Money Laundering and the USA Patriot Act.** A major focus of governmental policy on financial institutions in recent years has been aimed at combating money laundering and terrorist financing. The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001, or the USA Patriot Act, substantially broadened the scope of United States anti-money laundering laws and regulations by imposing significant new compliance and due diligence obligations, creating new crimes and penalties and expanding the extra-territorial jurisdiction of the United States. Financial institutions are also prohibited from entering into specified financial transactions and account relationships and must use enhanced due diligence procedures in their dealings with certain types of high-risk customers and implement a written customer identification program. Financial institutions must take certain steps to assist government agencies in detecting and preventing money laundering and report certain types of suspicious transactions. Regulatory authorities routinely examine financial institutions for compliance with these obligations, and for the failure of a financial institution to maintain and implement adequate programs to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, or to comply with all of the relevant laws or regulations, could have serious legal and reputational consequences for the institution, including causing applicable bank regulatory authorities not to approve merger or acquisition transactions when regulatory approval is required or to prohibit such transactions even if approval is not required. Regulatory authorities have imposed cease and desist orders and civil money penalties against institutions found to be violating these obligations.

**Interstate Branching.** Pursuant to the Dodd-Frank Act, national and state-chartered banks may open an initial branch in a state other than its home state (e.g., a host state) by establishing a de novo branch at any location in such host state at which a bank chartered in such host state could establish a branch. Applications to establish such branches must still be filed with the appropriate primary federal regulator. It is too early to predict whether President Trump's Executive Order or any subsequent presidential or congressional action will result in any change to a bank's ability to establish a de novo branch in a host state.

**Transactions with Affiliates.** FII, FSB, Five Star REIT, SDN and Courier Capital are affiliates within the meaning of the Federal Reserve Act. The Federal Reserve Act imposes limitations on a bank with respect to extensions of credit to, investments in, and certain other transactions with, its parent bank holding company and the holding company's other subsidiaries. Furthermore, bank loans and extensions of credit to affiliates also are subject to various collateral requirements.

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Various governmental requirements, including Sections 23A and 23B of the Federal Reserve Act and the FRB's Regulation W, limit borrowings by FII and its nonbank subsidiaries from FSB, and also limit various other transactions between FII and its nonbank subsidiaries, on the one hand, and FSB, on the other. For example, Section 23A of the Federal Reserve Act limits the aggregate outstanding amount of any insured depository institution's loans and other covered transactions with any particular nonbank affiliate to no more than 10% of the institution's total capital and limits the aggregate outstanding amount of any insured depository institution's covered transactions with all of its nonbank affiliates to no more than 20% of its total capital. Covered transactions are defined by statute to include a loan or extension of credit, as well as a purchase of securities issued by an affiliate, a purchase of assets (unless otherwise exempted by the FRB) from the affiliate, the acceptance of securities issued by the affiliate as collateral for a loan, and the issuance of a guarantee, acceptance or letter of credit on behalf of an affiliate. Section 23A of the Federal Reserve Act also generally requires that an insured depository institution's loans to its nonbank affiliates be, at a minimum, 100% secured, and Section 23B of the Federal Reserve Act generally requires that an insured depository institution's transactions with its nonbank affiliates be on terms and under circumstances that are substantially the same or at least as favorable as those prevailing for comparable transactions with non-affiliates. The Dodd-Frank Act significantly expanded the coverage and scope of the limitations on affiliate transactions within a banking organization. For example, commencing in July 2012, the Dodd-Frank Act applies the 10% of capital limit on covered transactions to financial subsidiaries and amends the definition of covered transaction to include (i) securities borrowing or lending transactions with an affiliate, and (ii) all derivatives transactions with an affiliate, to the extent that either causes a bank or its affiliate to have credit exposure to the securities borrowing/lending or derivative counterparty.

**Office of Foreign Assets Control Regulation.** The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, or OFAC, administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions against targeted foreign countries and regimes, under authority of various laws, including designated foreign countries, nationals and others. OFAC publishes lists of specially designated targets and countries. The Company is responsible for, among other things, blocking accounts of, and transactions with, such targets and countries, prohibiting unlicensed trade and financial transactions with them and reporting blocked transactions after their occurrence. Failure to comply with these sanctions could have serious legal and reputational consequences, including causing applicable bank regulatory authorities not to approve merger or acquisition transactions when regulatory approval is required or to prohibit such transactions even if approval is not required.

**Insurance Regulation.** SDN is required to be licensed or receive regulatory approval in nearly every state in which it does business. In addition, most jurisdictions require individuals who engage in brokerage and certain other insurance service activities to be personally licensed. These licensing laws and regulations vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In most jurisdictions, licensing laws and regulations generally grant broad discretion to supervisory authorities to adopt and amend regulations and to supervise regulated activities.

**Investment Advisory Regulation.** Courier Capital is a provider of investment consulting and financial planning services and, as such, is considered an investment adviser under the U.S. Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended (the Advisers Act). An investment adviser is any person or entity that provides advice to others, or that issues reports or analyses, regarding securities for compensation. While a BHC is generally excluded from regulation under the Advisers Act, the SEC has stated that this exclusion does not apply to investment adviser subsidiaries of BHCs, such as Courier Capital. Since Courier Capital has over \$100 million in assets under management it is considered a large adviser, which requires registration with the SEC by filing Form ADV and updating it at least once each year, and more frequently under certain specified circumstances. This registration covers Courier Capital and its employees as well as other persons under its control and supervision, such as independent contractors, provided that their activities are undertaken on behalf of Courier Capital.

In addition to these registration requirements, the Advisers Act contains numerous other provisions that impose obligations on investment advisors. For example, Section 206 includes anti-fraud provisions that courts have interpreted as establishing fiduciary duties extending to all services undertaken on behalf of the client. These duties include, but are not limited to, the disclosure of all material facts to clients, providing only suitable investment advice, and seeking best price execution of trades. Section 206 also has specific rules relating to, among other things, advertising, safeguarding client assets, the engagement of third-parties, the duty to supervise persons acting on the investment adviser's behalf, and the establishment of an effective internal compliance program and a code of ethics.

Courier Capital is subject to each of these obligations and, as applicable, restrictions, and is also subject to examination by the SEC's Office of Compliance, Investigations, and Examinations to assess its overall compliance with the Advisers Act and the effectiveness of its internal controls.

Prior to our acquisition of Courier Capital in January 2016, the Bank had provided investment advisory and broker-dealer services to its customers through its subsidiary Five Star Investment Services, Inc. Commencing in October 2013, the Bank entered into a partnership with LPL Financial, one of the nation's largest independent financial services companies (LPL), to provide investment advisory and broker-dealer services to its customers through LPL. This partnership continues and the Bank employs wealth advisors, who are licensed by LPL, to provide investment advisory and broker-dealer services to the Bank's customers. LPL is an investment adviser registered under the Advisers Act and is subject to its provisions.

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**Incentive Compensation.** Our compensation practices are subject to oversight by the Federal Reserve. In June 2010, the Federal banking agencies issued comprehensive final guidance on incentive compensation policies intended to ensure that the incentive compensation policies of banking organizations do not undermine the safety and soundness of such organizations by encouraging excessive risk-taking. The guidance, which covers all employees that have the ability to materially affect the risk profile of an organization, either individually or as part of a group, is based upon the key principles that a banking organization's incentive compensation arrangements should (i) provide incentives that do not encourage risk-taking beyond the organization's ability to effectively identify and manage risks, (ii) be compatible with effective internal controls and risk management, and (iii) be supported by strong corporate governance, including active and effective oversight by the organization's board of directors.

The Dodd-Frank Act requires the federal banking agencies to establish joint regulations or guidelines prohibiting incentive-based payment arrangements at specified regulated entities having at least \$1 billion in total consolidated assets (which would include the Company and the Bank) that encourage inappropriate risks by providing an executive officer, employee, director or principal shareholder with excessive compensation, fees or benefits or that could lead to material financial loss to the entity. In addition, the agencies must establish regulations or guidelines requiring enhanced disclosure to regulators of incentive-based compensation arrangements. In May 2016, six federal agencies, including the FRB, the FDIC and the SEC, invited public comments on a proposed rule to accomplish this mandate; no final rule has since been issued, however, and it is uncertain at this time whether the agencies intend to further pursue the rule for the foreseeable future.

The FRB will review, as part of the regular, risk-focused examination process, the incentive compensation arrangements of banking organizations, such as the Company, that are not large, complex banking organizations. These reviews will be tailored to each organization based on the scope and complexity of the organization's activities and the prevalence of incentive compensation arrangements. The findings of the supervisory initiatives will be included in reports of examination. Deficiencies will be incorporated into the organization's supervisory ratings, which can affect the organization's ability to make acquisitions and take other actions. Enforcement actions may be taken against a banking organization if its incentive compensation arrangements, or related risk-management control or governance processes, pose a risk to the organization's safety and soundness and the organization is not taking prompt and effective measures to correct the deficiencies.

**Other Future Legislation and Changes in Regulations.** In addition to the specific proposals described above, from time to time, various legislative and regulatory initiatives are introduced in Congress and state legislatures, as well as by regulatory agencies. Such initiatives may include proposals to expand or contract the powers of bank holding companies and depository institutions or proposals to substantially change the financial institution regulatory system. Such legislation could change banking statutes and/or our operating environment in substantial and unpredictable ways. If enacted, such legislation could increase or decrease the cost of doing business, limit or expand permissible activities or affect the competitive balance among banks, savings associations, credit unions, and other financial institutions. We cannot predict whether any such legislation will be enacted, and, if enacted, the effect that it, or any implementing regulations, would have on our financial condition or results of operations. A change in statutes, regulations or regulatory policies applicable to us or our subsidiaries could have a material effect on our business.

## **Impact of Inflation and Changing Prices**

Our financial statements included herein have been prepared in accordance with GAAP, which requires us to measure financial position and operating results principally using historic dollars. Changes in the relative value of money due to inflation or recession are generally not considered. The primary effect of inflation on our operations is reflected in increased operating costs. We believe changes in interest rates affect the financial condition of a financial institution to a far greater degree than changes in the inflation rate. While interest rates are generally influenced by changes in the

inflation rate, they do not necessarily change at the same rate or in the same magnitude. Interest rates are sensitive to many factors that are beyond our control, including changes in the expected rate of inflation, general and local economic conditions and the monetary and fiscal policies of the United States government, its agencies and various other governmental regulatory authorities.

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**Regulatory and Economic Policies**

Our business and earnings are affected by general and local economic conditions and by the monetary and fiscal policies of the U.S. government, its agencies and various other governmental regulatory authorities. The FRB regulates the supply of money in order to influence general economic conditions. Among the instruments of monetary policy available to the FRB are (i) conducting open market operations in U.S. government obligations, (ii) changing the discount rate on financial institution borrowings, (iii) imposing or changing reserve requirements against financial institution deposits, and (iv) restricting certain borrowings and imposing or changing reserve requirements against certain borrowings by financial institutions and their affiliates. These methods are used in varying degrees and combinations to directly affect the availability of bank loans and deposits, as well as the interest rates charged on loans and paid on deposits. For that reason, the policies of the FRB could have a material effect on our earnings.

On December 22, 2017, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (the TCJ Act ) was signed into law which, among other items, reduces the federal statutory corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent, effective January 1, 2018.

**EMPLOYEES**

At December 31, 2017, we had 656 employees, none of whom are subject to a collective bargaining agreement. Management believes our relations with employees are good.

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**ITEM 1A. RISK FACTORS**

An investment in our common stock is subject to risks inherent to our business. The material risks and uncertainties that management believes could affect us are described below. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described below, together with all of the other information included or incorporated by reference herein. This Annual Report on Form 10-K is qualified in its entirety by these risk factors. Further, to the extent that any of the information contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K constitutes forward-looking statements, the risk factors set forth below also are cautionary statements identifying important factors that could cause our actual results to differ materially from those expressed in any forward-looking statements made by or on behalf of us.

If any of the following risks actually occur, our financial condition and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. If this were to happen, the value of our common stock could decline significantly, and you could lose all or part of your investment.

**If we experience greater credit losses than anticipated, earnings may be adversely impacted.**

As a lender, we are exposed to the risk that customers will be unable to repay their loans according to their terms and that any collateral securing the payment of their loans may not be sufficient to assure repayment. Credit losses are inherent in the business of making loans and could have a material adverse impact on our results of operations.

We make various assumptions and judgments about the collectability of our loan portfolio, including the creditworthiness of our borrowers and the value of the real estate and other assets serving as collateral, and we provide an allowance for estimated loan losses based on a number of factors. We believe that the allowance for loan losses is adequate. However, if our assumptions or judgments are wrong, the allowance for loan losses may not be sufficient to cover the actual credit losses. We may have to increase the allowance in the future in response to the request of one of our primary banking regulators, to adjust for changing conditions and assumptions, or as a result of any deterioration in the quality of our loan portfolio. The actual amount of future provisions for credit losses may vary from the amount of past provisions.

**Our tax strategies and the value of our deferred tax assets and liabilities could adversely affect our operating results and regulatory capital ratios.**

Our tax strategies are dependent upon our ability to generate taxable income in future periods. Our tax strategies will be less effective in the event we fail to generate taxable income. Our deferred tax assets are subject to an evaluation of whether it is more likely than not that they will be realized for financial statement purposes. In making this determination, we consider all positive and negative evidence available including the impact of recent operating results as well as potential carryback of tax to prior years' taxable income, reversals of existing taxable temporary differences, tax planning strategies and projected earnings within the statutory tax loss carryover period. If we were to conclude that a significant portion of our deferred tax assets were not more likely than not to be realized, the required valuation allowance could adversely affect our financial position, results of operations and regulatory capital ratios. In addition, the value of our deferred tax assets could be adversely affected by a change in statutory tax rates.

**Geographic concentration may unfavorably impact our operations.**

Substantially all of our business and operations are concentrated in the Western and Central New York region. As a result of this geographic concentration, our results depend largely on economic conditions in these and surrounding areas. Deterioration in economic conditions in our market could:

increase loan delinquencies;

increase problem assets and foreclosures;

increase claims and lawsuits;

decrease the demand for our products and services; and

decrease the value of collateral for loans, especially real estate, reducing customers' borrowing power, the value of assets associated with non-performing loans and collateral coverage.

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Generally, we make loans to small to mid-sized businesses whose success depends on the regional economy. These businesses generally have fewer financial resources in terms of capital or borrowing capacity than larger entities. Adverse economic and business conditions in our market areas could reduce our growth rate, affect our borrowers ability to repay their loans and, consequently, adversely affect our business, financial condition and performance. For example, we place substantial reliance on real estate as collateral for our loan portfolio. A sharp downturn in real estate values in our market area could leave many of these loans inadequately collateralized. If we are required to liquidate the collateral securing a loan to satisfy the debt during a period of reduced real estate values, the impact on our results of operations could be materially adverse.

### **We depend on the accuracy and completeness of information about or from customers and counterparties.**

In deciding whether to extend credit or enter into other transactions, we may rely on information furnished by or on behalf of customers and counterparties, including financial statements, credit reports, and other financial information. We may also rely on representations of those customers, counterparties, or other third parties, such as independent auditors, as to the accuracy and completeness of that information. Reliance on inaccurate or misleading financial statements, credit reports, or other financial information could cause us to enter into unfavorable transactions, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

### **Our insurance brokerage subsidiary, SDN, is subject to risk related to the insurance industry.**

SDN derives the bulk of its revenue from commissions and fees earned from brokerage services. SDN does not determine the insurance premiums on which its commissions are based. Insurance premiums are cyclical in nature and may vary widely based on market conditions. As a result, insurance brokerage revenues and profitability can be volatile. As insurance companies outsource the production of premium revenue to non-affiliated brokers or agents such as SDN, those insurance companies may seek to further minimize their expenses by reducing the commission rates payable to insurance agents or brokers, which could adversely affect SDN's revenues. In addition, there have been and may continue to be various trends in the insurance industry toward alternative insurance markets including, among other things, increased use of self-insurance, captives, and risk retention groups. While SDN has been able to participate in certain of these activities and earn fees for such services, there can be no assurance that we will realize revenues and profitability as favorable as those realized from SDN's traditional brokerage activities.

### **Our investment advisory and wealth management operations are subject to risk related to the financial services industry.**

The financial services industry is subject to extensive regulation at the federal and state levels. It is very difficult to predict the future impact of the legislative and regulatory requirements affecting our business. The securities laws and other laws that govern the activities of our registered investment advisor are complex and subject to change. The activities of our investment advisory and wealth management operations are subject primarily to provisions of the Advisers Act and the Employee Retirement Income Act of 1940, as amended (ERISA). We are a fiduciary under ERISA. Our investment advisory services are also subject to state laws including anti-fraud laws and regulations. Any claim of noncompliance, regardless of merit or ultimate outcome, could subject us to investigation by the SEC or other regulatory authorities. Our compliance processes may not be sufficient to prevent assertions that we failed to comply with any applicable law, rule or regulation. If our investment advisory and wealth management operations are subject to investigation by the SEC or other regulatory authorities or if litigation is brought by clients based on our failure to comply with applicable regulations, our results of operations could be materially adversely effected.

In addition, the majority of our investment advisory revenue is from fees based on the percentage of assets under management. The value of the assets under management is determined, in part by market conditions that can be

volatile. As a result, investment advisory revenues and profitability can fluctuate with market conditions.

**We may be unable to successfully implement our growth strategies, including the integration and successful management of newly-acquired businesses.**

Our current growth strategy is multi-faceted. We seek to expand our branch network into nearby areas, make strategic acquisitions of loans, portfolios, other regional banks and non-banking firms whose businesses we feel may be complementary with ours, and to continue to organically grow our core deposits. Any failure by us to effectively implement any one or more of these growth strategies could have several negative effects, including a possible decline in the size or the quality, or both, of our loan portfolio or a decrease in profitability caused by an increase in operating expenses.

In particular, we hope to continue an active merger and acquisition strategy. However, even if we use our common stock as the predominant form of consideration, we may need to raise capital in order to negotiate a transaction on terms acceptable to us and there can be no assurance that we will be able to raise a sufficient amount of capital to enable us to complete an acquisition. It is also possible that even with adequate capital we may still be unable to complete an acquisition on favorable terms, causing us to miss opportunities to increase our earnings and expand or diversify our operations.

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Our growth strategy is also dependent upon the successful integration of new businesses, including SDN and Courier Capital, as well as any future acquisitions, into our existing operations. While our senior management team has had extensive experience in acquisitions and post-acquisition integration, there is no guarantee that our current or future integration efforts will be successful, and if our senior management is forced to spend a disproportionate amount of time on integrating recently-acquired businesses, it may distract their attention from other growth opportunities.

### **We are subject to environmental liability risk associated with our lending activities.**

A significant portion of our loan portfolio is secured by real property. During the ordinary course of business, we may foreclose on and take title to properties securing certain loans. There is a risk that hazardous or toxic substances could be found on properties we have foreclosed upon. If hazardous or toxic substances are found, we may be liable for remediation costs, as well as for personal injury and property damage regardless of whether we knew, had reason to know of, or caused the release of such substance. Environmental laws may require us to incur substantial expenses and may materially reduce the affected property's value or limit our ability to use or sell the affected property. In addition, future laws or more stringent interpretations or enforcement policies with respect to existing laws may increase our exposure to environmental liability. The remediation costs and any other financial liabilities associated with an environmental hazard could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

### **Our commercial business and mortgage loans increase our exposure to credit risks.**

At December 31, 2017, our portfolio of commercial business and mortgage loans totaled \$1,259.2 million, or 46.1% of total loans. We plan to continue to emphasize the origination of these types of loans, which generally expose us to a greater risk of nonpayment and loss than residential real estate or consumer loans because repayment of such loans often depends on the successful operations and income stream of the borrowers. Additionally, such loans typically involve larger loan balances to single borrowers or groups of related borrowers compared to consumer loans or residential real estate loans. A sudden downturn in the economy could result in borrowers being unable to repay their loans, thus exposing us to increased credit risk.

### **Our indirect lending involves risk elements in addition to normal credit risk.**

A portion of our current lending involves the purchase of consumer automobile installment sales contracts from automobile dealers located in Western, Central and the Capital District of New York, and Northern and Central Pennsylvania. These loans are for the purchase of new or used automobiles. We serve customers that cover a range of creditworthiness, and the required terms and rates are reflective of those risk profiles. While these loans have higher yields than many of our other loans, such loans involve risk elements in addition to normal credit risk. Additional risk elements associated with indirect lending include the limited personal contact with the borrower as a result of indirect lending through non-bank channels, namely automobile dealers. While indirect automobile loans are secured, such loans are secured by depreciating assets and characterized by loan-to-value ratios that could result in us not recovering the full value of an outstanding loan upon default by the borrower. If the losses from our indirect loan portfolio are higher than anticipated, it could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

### **We accept deposits that do not have a fixed term and which may be withdrawn by the customer at any time for any reason.**

At December 31, 2017, we had \$2.36 billion of deposit liabilities that have no maturity and, therefore, may be withdrawn by the depositor at any time. These deposit liabilities include our checking, savings, and money market deposit accounts.

Market conditions may impact the competitive landscape for deposits in the banking industry. The unprecedented low rate environment and future actions the Federal Reserve may take may impact pricing and demand for deposits in the banking industry. The withdrawal of more deposits than we anticipate could have an adverse impact on our profitability as this source of funding, if not replaced by similar deposit funding, would need to be replaced with wholesale funding, the sale of interest-earning assets, or a combination of these two actions. The replacement of deposit funding with wholesale funding could cause our overall cost of funding to increase, which would reduce our net interest income. A loss of interest-earning assets could also reduce our net interest income.

**Any future FDIC insurance premium increases may adversely affect our earnings.**

The amount that is assessed by the FDIC for deposit insurance is set by the FDIC based on a variety of factors. These include the depositor insurance fund's reserve ratio, the Bank's assessment base, which is equal to average consolidated total assets minus average tangible equity, and various inputs into the FDIC's assessment rate calculation.

If there are financial institution failures, we may be required to pay higher FDIC premiums. Such increases of FDIC insurance premiums may adversely impact our earnings. See Part I, Item 1 Business, Supervision and Regulation-Federal Deposit Insurance Assessments for more information about FDIC insurance premiums.

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**We are highly regulated and any adverse regulatory action may result in additional costs, loss of business opportunities, and reputational damage.**

As described in the section captioned "Supervision and Regulation" included in Part I, Item 1, "Business," both our Banking and Non-Banking segments are subject to extensive supervision, regulation and examination. The various regulatory authorities with jurisdiction over us have significant latitude in addressing our compliance with applicable laws and regulations including, but not limited to, those governing consumer credit, fair lending, anti-money laundering, anti-terrorism, capital adequacy, asset quality and risk, management ability and performance, earnings, liquidity, and various other factors affecting us. As part of this regulatory structure, we are subject to policies and other guidance developed by the regulatory agencies with respect to, among other things, capital levels, the timing and amount of dividend payments, the classification of assets and the establishment of adequate loan loss reserves for regulatory purposes. Our regulators have broad discretion to impose restrictions and limitations on our operations if they determine, for any reason, that our operations are unsafe or unsound, fail to comply with applicable law or are otherwise inconsistent with laws and regulations or with the supervisory policies of these agencies.

This supervisory framework could materially impact the conduct, growth and profitability of our operations. Any failure on our part to comply with current laws, regulations, other regulatory requirements or safe and sound banking, insurance, or investment advisory practices or concerns about our financial condition, or any related regulatory sanctions or adverse actions against us, could increase our costs or restrict our ability to expand our business and result in damage to our reputation.

In March 2018, we were notified by the FRB of New York that its most recent evaluation of the Bank's CRA performance for the time period January 2011 through September 2013, resulted in an overall rating of "Needs to Improve." This rating may subject the Bank to enhanced scrutiny in any application for business expansion it files with the Federal Reserve or the NY DFS, which may result in a delay in approving or the denial of such application. In addition, the publication of the "Needs to Improve" rating may damage our reputation, making it more difficult for us to achieve our business goals and objectives, particularly in the Buffalo and Rochester metropolitan areas.

**We make certain assumptions and estimates in preparing our financial statements that may prove to be incorrect, which could significantly impact our results of operations, cash flows and financial condition, and we are subject to new or changing accounting rules and interpretations, and the failure by us to correctly interpret or apply these evolving rules and interpretations could have a material adverse effect.**

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States require us to use certain assumptions and estimates in preparing our financial statements, including in determining credit loss reserves and reserves related to litigation, among other items. Certain of our financial instruments, including available-for-sale securities and certain loans, require a determination of their fair value in order to prepare our financial statements. Where quoted market prices are not available, we may make fair value determinations based on internally developed models or other means, which ultimately rely to some degree on management judgment. Some of these and other assets and liabilities may have no direct observable price levels, making their valuation particularly subjective, as they are based on significant estimation and judgment. In addition, sudden illiquidity in markets or declines in prices of certain loans and securities may make it more difficult to value certain balance sheet items, which may lead to the possibility that such valuations will be subject to further change or adjustment. If assumptions or estimates underlying our financial statements are incorrect, we may experience material losses that would impact our results of operations, cash flows and financial condition.

As indicated in Note 1, Summary of Significant Accounting Policies - Recent Accounting Pronouncements, to the Consolidated Financial Statements included in Item 8 of this Annual Report on Form 10-K, the regulations, rules,

standards, policies, and interpretations underlying GAAP are constantly evolving and may change significantly over time. If we fail to interpret any one or more of these GAAP provisions correctly, or if our methodology in applying them to our financial reporting or disclosures is at all flawed, our financial statements may contain inaccuracies that, if severe enough, could warrant a later restatement by us, which in turn could result in a material adverse event.

**Legal and regulatory proceedings and related matters could adversely affect us and the banking industry in general.**

We have been, and may in the future be, subject to various legal and regulatory proceedings. It is inherently difficult to assess the outcome of these matters, and there can be no assurance that we will prevail in any proceeding or litigation. Legal and regulatory matters of any degree of significance could result in substantial cost and diversion of our efforts, which by itself could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and operating results. While, as disclosed in Part I, Item 3, Legal Proceedings, our management does not believe that there are any pending or threatened proceedings against us, that, if determined adversely, would have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations or financial condition, there can be no guarantee that such a proceeding will not arise in the near or long-term future. Further, adverse determinations in such matters could result in actions by our regulators that could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition or results of operations.

We establish reserves for legal claims when payments associated with the claims become probable and the costs can be reasonably estimated. We may still incur legal costs for a matter even if we have not established a reserve. In addition, due to the inherent subjectivity of the assessments and unpredictability of the outcome of legal proceedings, the actual cost of resolving a legal claim may be substantially higher than any amounts reserved for that matter. The ultimate resolution of a pending legal proceeding, depending on the remedy sought and granted, could adversely affect our results of operations and financial condition.

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**A breach in security of our or third party information systems, including the occurrence of a cyber incident or a deficiency in cybersecurity, or a failure by us to comply with enhanced New York State cybersecurity regulations, may subject us to liability, result in a loss of customer business or damage our brand image.**

We rely heavily on communications, information systems (both internal and provided by third parties) and the internet to conduct our business. Our business depends on our ability to process and monitor a large volume of daily transactions in compliance with legal, regulatory and internal standards and specifications. In addition, a significant portion of our operations relies heavily on the secure processing, storage and transmission of personal and confidential information of our customers and clients. These risks may increase in the future as our customers continue to adapt to mobile payment and other internet-based product offerings and we expand the availability of web-based products and applications.

In addition, several U.S. financial institutions have experienced significant distributed denial-of-service attacks, some of which involved sophisticated and targeted attacks intended to disable or degrade service, or sabotage systems. Other potential attacks have attempted to obtain unauthorized access to confidential information or destroy data, often through the introduction of computer viruses or malware, cyber-attacks and other means. To date, none of these types of attacks have had a material effect on our business or operations. Such security attacks can originate from a wide variety of sources, including persons who are involved with organized crime or who may be linked to terrorist organizations or hostile foreign governments. Those same parties may also attempt to fraudulently induce employees, customers or other users of our systems to disclose sensitive information in order to gain access to our data or that of our customers or clients. We are also subject to the risk that our employees may intercept and transmit unauthorized confidential or proprietary information. An interception, misuse or mishandling of personal, confidential or proprietary information being sent to or received from a customer or third party could result in legal liability, remediation costs, regulatory action and reputational harm, any of which could adversely affect our results of operations and financial condition.

As of March 1, 2017, we are required to comply with new cybersecurity regulations promulgated by the NY DFS that will be phased in between September 2017 and March 2019. Any failure by us to timely and successfully implement some or all of these regulations, which mandate, among other things, the creation of a new cybersecurity program, a written policy, the appointment of an information security officer and certification by the NY DFS, could also result in regulatory sanctions, public disclosure and reputational damage even if we do not experience a significant cybersecurity breach.

**We face competition in staying current with technological changes to compete and meet customer demands.**

The financial services market, including banking services, faces rapid changes with frequent introductions of new technology-driven products and services. In addition to better serving customers, the effective use of technology increases efficiency and may enable us to reduce costs. Our future success may depend, in part, on our ability to use technology to provide products and services that provide convenience to customers and to create additional efficiencies in our operations. Some of our competitors have substantially greater resources to invest in technological improvements than we currently have. We may not be able to effectively implement new technology-driven products and services or be successful in marketing these products and services to our customers. As a result, our ability to effectively compete to retain or acquire new business may be impaired, and our business, financial condition or results of operations, may be adversely affected.

**We rely on other companies to provide key components of our business infrastructure.**

Third party vendors provide key components of our business infrastructure such as internet connections, network access and core application processing. While we have selected these third party vendors carefully, we do not control their actions. Any problems caused by these third parties, including as a result of them not providing us their services for any reason or them performing their services poorly, could adversely affect our ability to deliver products and services to our customers or otherwise conduct our business efficiently and effectively. Replacing these third party vendors could also entail significant delay and expense.

Third parties perform significant operational services on our behalf. These third-party vendors are subject to similar risks as us relating to cybersecurity, breakdowns or failures of their own systems or employees. One or more of our vendors may experience a cybersecurity event or operational disruption and, if any such event does occur, it may not be adequately addressed, either operationally or financially, by the third-party vendor. Certain of our vendors may have limited indemnification obligations or may not have the financial capacity to satisfy their indemnification obligations. Financial or operational difficulties of a vendor could also impair our operations if those difficulties interfere with the vendor's ability to serve us. If a critical vendor is unable to meet our needs in a timely manner or if the services or products provided by such a vendor are terminated or otherwise delayed and if we are not able to develop alternative sources for these services and products quickly and cost-effectively, it could have a material adverse effect on our business. Federal banking regulators recently issued regulatory guidance on how banks select, engage and manage their outside vendors. These regulations may affect the circumstances and conditions under which we work with third parties and the cost of managing such relationships.

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**We use financial models for business planning purposes that may not adequately predict future results.**

We use financial models to aid in planning for various purposes including our capital and liquidity needs, interest rate risk, potential charge-offs, reserves, and other purposes. The models used may not accurately account for all variables that could affect future results, may fail to predict outcomes accurately and/or may overstate or understate certain effects. As a result of these potential failures, we may not adequately prepare for future events and may suffer losses or other setbacks due to these failures.

**We may not be able to attract and retain skilled people.**

Our success depends, in large part, on our ability to attract and retain skilled people. Competition for highly talented people can be intense, and we may not be able to hire sufficiently skilled people or retain them. Further, the rural location of our principal executive offices and many of our bank branches make it challenging for us to attract skilled people to such locations. The unexpected loss of services of one or more of our key personnel could have a material adverse impact on our business because of their skills, knowledge of our markets, years of industry experience, and the difficulty of promptly finding qualified replacement personnel.

**Acquisitions may disrupt our business and dilute shareholder value.**

We intend to continue to pursue a growth strategy for our business by expanding our branch network into communities within or adjacent to markets where we currently conduct business. We may consider acquisitions of loans or securities portfolios, lending or leasing firms, commercial and small business lenders, residential lenders, direct banks, banks or bank branches, wealth and investment management firms, securities brokerage firms, specialty finance or other financial services-related companies. We also intend to expand our SDN and Courier subsidiaries by acquiring smaller insurance agencies and wealth management firms in areas which complement our current footprint. We may be unsuccessful in expanding our SDN and Courier subsidiaries through acquisition because of the growing interest in acquiring insurance brokers and wealth management firms, which could make it more difficult for us to identify appropriate targets and could make such acquisitions more expensive. Even if we are able to identify appropriate acquisition targets, we may not have sufficient capital to fund acquisitions or be able to execute transactions on favorable terms. If we are unable to expand our SDN and Courier operations through smaller acquisitions, we may not be able to achieve all of the expected benefits of the SDN and Courier acquisitions, which could adversely affect our results of operations and financial condition.

Acquiring other banks, businesses, or branches involves potential adverse impact to our financial results and various other risks commonly associated with acquisitions, including, among other things:

- difficulty in estimating the value of the target company;
- payment of a premium over book and market values that may dilute our tangible book value and earnings per share in the short and long term;

- potential exposure to unknown or contingent liabilities of the target company;
- exposure to potential asset quality issues of the target company;
- volatility in reported income as goodwill impairment losses could occur irregularly and in varying amounts;
- challenge and expense of integrating the operations and personnel of the target company;

inability to realize the expected revenue increases, cost savings, increases in geographic or product presence, and / or other projected benefits;  
potential disruption to our business;  
potential diversion of our management's time and attention;  
the possible loss of key employees and customers of the target company;  
potential changes in banking or tax laws or regulations that may affect the target company; and  
additional regulatory burdens associated with new lines of business.

**We are subject to interest rate risk.**

Our earnings and cash flows depend largely upon our net interest income. Interest rates are highly sensitive to many factors that are beyond our control, including general economic conditions and policies of governmental and regulatory agencies, particularly the Federal Reserve. Changes in monetary policy, including changes in interest rates, could influence not only the interest we receive on loans and investments and the amount of interest we pay on deposits and borrowings, but such changes could also affect (i) our ability to originate loans and obtain deposits; (ii) the fair value of our financial assets and liabilities; and (iii) the average duration of our mortgage-backed securities portfolio and other interest-earning assets. If the interest rates paid on deposits and other borrowings increase at a faster rate than the interest rates received on loans and other investments, our net interest income, and therefore earnings, could be adversely affected. Earnings could also be adversely affected if the interest rates received on loans and other investments fall more quickly than the interest rates paid on deposits and other borrowings.

Any substantial, unexpected or prolonged change in market interest rates could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. Also, our interest rate risk modeling techniques and assumptions likely may not fully predict or capture the impact of actual interest rate changes on our balance sheet.

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**Our business may be adversely affected by conditions in the financial markets and economic conditions generally.**

Our financial performance generally, and in particular the ability of borrowers to pay interest on and repay principal of outstanding loans and the value of collateral securing those loans, as well as demand for loans and other products and services we offer, is highly dependent on the business environment in the markets where we operate, in the State of New York and in the United States as a whole. A favorable business environment is generally characterized by, among other factors, economic growth, efficient capital markets, low inflation, low unemployment, high business and investor confidence, and strong business earnings. Unfavorable or uncertain economic and market conditions can be caused by declines in economic growth, business activity or investor or business confidence; limitations on the availability or increases in the cost of credit and capital; increases in inflation or interest rates; high unemployment, natural disasters; or a combination of these or other factors.

**The policies of the Federal Reserve have a significant impact on our earnings.**

The policies of the Federal Reserve impact us significantly. The Federal Reserve regulates the supply of money and credit in the United States. Its policies directly and indirectly influence the rate of interest earned on loans and paid on borrowings and interest-bearing deposits and can also affect the value of financial instruments we hold. Those policies determine, to a significant extent, our cost of funds for lending and investing and impact our net interest income, our primary source of revenue. Changes in those policies are beyond our control and are difficult to predict. Federal Reserve policies can also affect our borrowers, potentially increasing the risk that they may fail to repay their loans. For example, a tightening of the money supply by the Federal Reserve could reduce the demand for a borrower's products and services. This could adversely affect the borrower's earnings and ability to repay its loan, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

**The soundness of other financial institutions could adversely affect us.**

Financial services institutions are interrelated as a result of trading, clearing, counterparty, or other relationships. We have exposure to many different industries and counterparties, and we routinely execute transactions with counterparties in the financial services industry, including commercial banks, brokers and dealers, investment banks, and other institutional clients. Many of these transactions expose us to credit risk in the event of a default by our counterparty or client. In addition, our credit risk may be exacerbated when the collateral held by us cannot be realized or is liquidated at prices not sufficient to recover the full amount of the credit or derivative exposure due us. Any such losses could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

**The value of our goodwill and other intangible assets may decline in the future.**

As of December 31, 2017, we had \$65.8 million of goodwill and \$8.9 million of other intangible assets. Significant and sustained declines in our stock price and market capitalization, significant declines in our expected future cash flows, significant adverse changes in the business climate or slower growth rates, any or all of which could be materially impacted by many of the risk factors discussed herein, may necessitate our taking charges in the future related to the impairment of our goodwill. Future regulatory actions could also have a material impact on assessments of goodwill for impairment. If the fair value of our net assets improves at a faster rate than the market value of our reporting units, or if we were to experience increases in book values of a reporting unit in excess of the increase in fair value of equity, we may also have to take charges related to the impairment of our goodwill. If we were to conclude that a future write-down of our goodwill is necessary, we would record the appropriate charge, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

Identifiable intangible assets other than goodwill consist of core deposit intangibles and other intangible assets (primarily customer relationships). Adverse events or circumstances could impact the recoverability of these intangible assets including loss of core deposits, significant losses of customer accounts and/or balances, increased competition or adverse changes in the economy. To the extent these intangible assets are deemed unrecoverable, a non-cash impairment charge would be recorded which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

During the fourth quarter of 2015, we determined that the carrying value of our SDN reporting unit exceeded its fair value and recorded a \$751 thousand impairment charge. During the second quarter of 2017, we again determined that the carrying value of our SDN reporting unit exceeded its fair value and recorded an additional \$1.6 million impairment charge. For further discussion, see Note 1, Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, and Note 7, Goodwill and Other Intangible Assets, to the Consolidated Financial Statements included in Item 8 of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

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**We operate in a highly competitive industry and market area.**

We face substantial competition in all areas of our operations from a variety of different competitors, many of which are larger and may have more financial resources. Such competitors primarily include national, regional and internet banks within the markets in which we operate. We also face competition from many other types of financial institutions, including, without limitation, savings and loan associations, credit unions, finance companies, brokerage firms, insurance companies and other financial intermediaries. The financial services industry could become even more competitive as a result of legislative, regulatory and technological changes and continued consolidation. Banks, securities firms and insurance companies can merge under the umbrella of a financial holding company, which can offer virtually any type of financial service, including banking, securities underwriting, insurance (both agency and underwriting), and merchant banking. Also, technology has lowered barriers to entry and made it possible for nonbanks to offer products and services traditionally provided by banks, such as automatic transfer and automatic payment systems. More recently, peer to peer lending has emerged as an alternative borrowing source for our customers and many other non-banks offer lending and payment services in competition with banks. Many of these competitors have fewer regulatory constraints and may have lower cost structures. Additionally, due to their size, many competitors may be able to achieve economies of scale and, as a result, may offer a broader range of products and services as well as better pricing for those products and services than we can.

Our ability to compete successfully depends on a number of factors, including, among other things:

the ability to develop, maintain and build upon long-term customer relationships based on top quality service, high ethical standards and safe, sound assets;

the ability to expand our market position;

the scope, relevance and pricing of products and services offered to meet customer needs and demands;

the rate at which we introduce new products and services relative to our competitors;

customer satisfaction with our level of service; and

industry and general economic trends.

Failure to perform in any of these areas could significantly weaken our competitive position, which could adversely affect our growth and profitability, which, in turn, could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

**Severe weather, natural disasters, acts of war or terrorism, and other external events could significantly impact our business.**

Severe weather, natural disasters, acts of war or terrorism, and other adverse external events could have a significant impact on our ability to conduct business. Such events could affect the operations of our bank branches, stability of

our deposit base, impair the ability of borrowers to repay outstanding loans, impair the value of collateral securing loans, cause significant property damage, result in loss of revenue, and/or cause us to incur additional expenses. The occurrence of any such event could have a material adverse effect on our business, which, in turn, could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

**Liquidity is essential to our businesses.**

Our liquidity could be impaired by an inability to access the capital markets or unforeseen outflows of cash. Reduced liquidity may arise due to circumstances that we may be unable to control, such as a general market disruption or an operational problem that affects third parties or us. Our efforts to monitor and manage liquidity risk may not be successful or sufficient to deal with dramatic or unanticipated reductions in our liquidity. In such events, our cost of funds may increase, thereby reducing our net interest income, or we may need to sell a portion of our investment and/or loan portfolio, which, depending upon market conditions, could result in us realizing a loss.

**We may need to raise additional capital in the future and such capital may not be available on acceptable terms or at all.**

We may need to raise additional capital in the future to provide sufficient capital resources and liquidity to meet our commitments and business needs. Our ability to raise additional capital, if needed, will depend on our financial performance and, among other things, conditions in the capital markets at that time which is outside of our control.

In addition, we are highly regulated, and our regulators could require us to raise additional common equity in the future. We and our regulators perform a variety of analyses of our assets, including the preparation of stress case scenarios, and as a result of those assessments we could determine, or our regulators could require us, to raise additional capital.

We cannot assure that required capital will be available on acceptable terms or at all. Any occurrence that may limit our access to the capital markets, such as a decline in the confidence of debt purchasers, depositors of the Bank or counterparties participating in the capital markets, or a downgrade of our debt rating, may adversely affect our capital costs and ability to raise capital and, in turn, our liquidity. An inability to raise additional capital on acceptable terms when needed could have a material adverse impact on our business, financial condition, results of operations or liquidity.

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**We rely on dividends from our subsidiaries for most of our revenue.**

We are a separate and distinct legal entity from our subsidiaries. A substantial portion of our revenue comes from dividends from our Bank subsidiary. These dividends are the principal source of funds we use to pay dividends on our common and preferred stock, and to pay interest and principal on our debt. Federal and/or state laws and regulations limit the amount of dividends that our Bank subsidiary may pay to us. Also, our right to participate in a distribution of assets upon a subsidiary's liquidation or reorganization is subject to the prior claims of the subsidiary's creditors. In the event our Bank subsidiary is unable to pay dividends to us, we may not be able to service debt, pay obligations, or pay dividends on our common and preferred stock. The inability to receive dividends from our Bank subsidiary could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, and results of operations.

**We may not pay or may reduce the dividends on our common stock.**

Holders of our common stock are only entitled to receive such dividends as our Board of Directors may declare out of funds legally available for such payments. Although we have historically declared cash dividends on our common stock, we are not required to do so and may reduce or eliminate our common stock dividend in the future. This could adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

**We may issue debt and equity securities or securities convertible into equity securities, any of which may be senior to our common stock as to distributions and in liquidation, which could dilute our current shareholders or negatively affect the value of our common stock.**

In the future, we may attempt to increase our capital resources by entering into debt or debt-like financing that is unsecured or secured by all or up to all of our assets, or by issuing additional debt or equity securities, which could include issuances of secured or unsecured commercial paper, medium-term notes, senior notes, subordinated notes, preferred stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable for equity securities. In the event of our liquidation, our lenders and holders of our debt and preferred securities would receive a distribution of our available assets before distributions to the holders of our common stock. Because our decision to incur debt and issue securities in our future offerings will depend on market conditions and other factors beyond our control, we cannot predict or estimate the amount, timing or nature of our future offerings and debt financings. Further, market conditions could require us to accept less favorable terms for the issuance of our securities in the future. We may also issue additional shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock that could dilute our current shareholders and effect the value of our common stock.

**Our certificate of incorporation, our bylaws, and certain banking laws may have an anti-takeover effect.**

Provisions of our certificate of incorporation, our bylaws, and federal and state banking laws, including regulatory approval requirements, could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire us, even if doing so would be perceived to be beneficial to our shareholders. The combination of these provisions may discourage others from initiating a potential merger, takeover or other change of control transaction, which, in turn, could adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

**The market price of our common stock may fluctuate significantly in response to a number of factors.**

Our quarterly and annual operating results have varied in the past and could vary significantly in the future, which makes it difficult for us to predict our future operating results. Our operating results may fluctuate due to a variety of factors, many of which are outside of our control, including the changing U.S. economic environment and changes in the commercial and residential real estate market, any of which may cause our stock price to fluctuate. If our operating

results fall below the expectations of investors or securities analysts, the price of our common stock could decline substantially. Our stock price can fluctuate significantly in response to a variety of factors including, among other things:

volatility of stock market prices and volumes in general;

changes in market valuations of similar companies;

changes in conditions in credit markets;

changes in accounting policies or procedures as required by the Financial Accounting Standards Board, or FASB, or other regulatory agencies;

legislative and regulatory actions (including the impact of the Dodd-Frank Act and related regulations) subjecting us to additional regulatory oversight which may result in increased compliance costs and/or require us to change our business model;

government intervention in the U.S. financial system and the effects of and changes in trade and monetary and fiscal policies and laws, including the interest rate policies of the Federal Reserve Board;

additions or departures of key members of management;

fluctuations in our quarterly or annual operating results; and

changes in analysts' estimates of our financial performance.

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**ITEM 1B. UNRESOLVED STAFF COMMENTS**

None.

**ITEM 2. PROPERTIES**

We own a 27,400 square foot building in Warsaw, New York that serves as our headquarters, and principal executive and administrative offices. We lease a 52,300 square foot regional administrative facility located in Rochester, New York. This lease expires in August 2027, with options for two additional ten-year extensions.

We are engaged in the banking business through 53 branch offices, of which 35 are owned and 18 are leased, in the following fifteen contiguous counties of Western and Central New York: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wyoming and Yates Counties. The operating leases for our branch offices expire at various dates through the year 2047 and generally include options to renew. The Bank also has administrative operations at a leased facility in Amherst, New York.

SDN operates from a leased 14,400 square foot office located in Williamsville, New York. The lease for such space, which is used by SDN and several of our Bank's commercial lenders, extends through September 2021. SDN also leases one retail location.

Courier Capital operates from an owned 11,000 square foot office, located in Buffalo, New York. Courier Capital also has operations at a leased facility in Amherst, New York and an owned facility in Jamestown, New York.

We believe that our properties have been adequately maintained, are in good operating condition and are suitable for our business as presently conducted, including meeting the prescribed security requirements. For additional information, see Note 6, Premises and Equipment, Net, and Note 11, Commitments and Contingencies, in the accompanying financial statements included in Part II, Item 8, of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

**ITEM 3. LEGAL PROCEEDINGS**

From time to time we are a party to or otherwise involved in legal proceedings arising out of the normal course of business. Management does not believe that there is any pending or threatened proceeding against us, which, if determined adversely, would have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations or financial condition.

**ITEM 4. MINE SAFETY DISCLOSURES**

Not applicable.

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**Table of Contents****PART II****ITEM 5. MARKET FOR REGISTRANT'S COMMON EQUITY, RELATED STOCKHOLDER MATTERS AND ISSUER PURCHASES OF EQUITY SECURITIES**

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol **FISI**. At February 23, 2018, 15,904,403 shares of our common stock were outstanding and held by approximately 3,400 shareholders of record. During 2017, the high sales price of our common stock was \$35.40 and the low sales price was \$25.65. The closing price per share of our common stock on December 29, 2017, the last trading day of our fiscal year, was \$31.10. We declared dividends of \$0.85 per common share during the year ended December 31, 2017. See additional information regarding the market price and dividends paid in Part II, Item 6, **Selected Financial Data**.

We have paid regular quarterly cash dividends on our common stock and our Board of Directors presently intends to continue this practice, subject to our results of operations and the need for those funds for debt service and other purposes. See the discussions in the section captioned **Supervision and Regulation** included in Part I, Item 1, **Business**, in the section captioned **Liquidity and Capital Resources** included in Part II, Item 7, in **Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations** and in Note 12, **Regulatory Matters**, in the accompanying financial statements included in Part II, Item 8, **Financial Statements and Supplementary Data**, all of which are included elsewhere in this report and incorporated herein by reference thereto.

**Stock Performance Graph**

The stock performance graph below compares (a) the cumulative total return on our common stock for the period beginning December 31, 2012 as reported by the NASDAQ Global Select Market, through December 31, 2017, (b) the cumulative total return on stocks included in the NASDAQ Composite Index over the same period, and (c) the cumulative total return, as compiled by S&P Global Market Intelligence, formerly SNL Financial LC ( **SNL** ), of Major Exchange (NYSE, NYSE MKT and NASDAQ) Banks with \$1 billion to \$5 billion in assets over the same period. Cumulative return assumes the reinvestment of dividends. The graph was prepared by S&P Global Market Intelligence and is expressed in dollars based on an assumed investment of \$100.

<b>Index</b>	<b>Period Ending</b>					
	<b>12/31/12</b>	<b>12/31/13</b>	<b>12/31/14</b>	<b>12/31/15</b>	<b>12/31/16</b>	<b>12/31/17</b>
Financial Institutions, Inc.	100.00	137.52	144.64	166.38	208.99	195.36
NASDAQ Composite	100.00	140.12	160.78	171.97	187.22	242.71
SNL Bank \$1B-\$5B Index	100.00	145.41	152.04	170.20	244.85	261.04



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	<b>At or for the year ended December 31,</b>				
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Selected financial condition data:</b>					
Total assets	\$ 4,105,210	\$ 3,710,340	\$ 3,381,024	\$ 3,089,521	\$ 2,928,636
Loans, net	2,700,345	2,309,227	2,056,677	1,884,365	1,806,883
Investment securities	1,041,439	1,083,264	1,030,112	916,932	859,185
Deposits	3,210,174	2,995,222	2,730,531	2,450,527	2,320,056
Borrowings	485,331	370,561	332,090	334,804	337,042
Shareholders equity	381,177	320,054	293,844	279,532	254,839
Common shareholders equity	363,848	302,714	276,504	262,192	237,497
Tangible common shareholders equity <sup>(1)</sup>	289,145	227,074	209,558	193,553	187,495
<b>Selected operations data:</b>					
Interest income	\$ 130,110	\$ 115,231	\$ 105,450	\$ 101,055	\$ 98,931
Interest expense	17,495	12,541	10,137	7,281	7,337
Net interest income	112,615	102,690	95,313	93,774	91,594
Provision for loan losses	13,361	9,638	7,381	7,789	9,079
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	99,254	93,052	87,932	85,985	82,515
Noninterest income	34,730	35,760	30,337	25,350	24,833
Noninterest expense	90,513	84,671	79,393	72,355	69,441
Income before income taxes	43,471	44,141	38,876	38,980	37,907
Income tax expense	9,945	12,210	10,539	9,625	12,377
Net income	\$ 33,526	\$ 31,931	\$ 28,337	\$ 29,355	\$ 25,530
Preferred stock dividends	1,462	1,462	1,462	1,462	1,466
Net income available to common shareholders	\$ 32,064	\$ 30,469	\$ 26,875	\$ 27,893	\$ 24,064
<b>Stock and related per share data:</b>					
Earnings per common share:					
Basic	\$ 2.13	\$ 2.11	\$ 1.91	\$ 2.01	\$ 1.75
Diluted	\$ 2.13	\$ 2.10	\$ 1.90	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.75
Cash dividends declared per common share	\$ 0.85	\$ 0.81	\$ 0.80	\$ 0.77	\$ 0.74
Common book value per share	\$ 22.85	\$ 20.82	\$ 19.49	\$ 18.57	\$ 17.17
Tangible common book value per share <sup>(1)</sup>	\$ 18.16	\$ 15.62	\$ 14.77	\$ 13.71	\$ 13.56

Market price (NASDAQ: FISI):

High	\$	35.40	\$	34.55	\$	29.04	\$	27.02	\$	26.59
Low	\$	25.65	\$	25.98	\$	21.67	\$	19.72	\$	17.92
Close	\$	31.10	\$	34.20	\$	28.00	\$	25.15	\$	24.71

- (1) This is a non-GAAP measure that we believe is useful in understanding our financial performance and condition. Refer to the GAAP to Non-GAAP Reconciliation for further information.

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<i>(Dollars in thousands)</i>	<b>At or for the year ended December 31,</b>				
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Performance ratios:</b>					
Net income, returns on:					
Average assets	0.86%	0.90%	0.87%	0.98%	0.91%
Average equity	9.62%	10.01%	9.78%	10.80%	10.10%
Average common equity	9.68%	10.10%	9.87%	10.96%	10.23%
Average tangible common equity <sup>(1)</sup>	12.51%	13.51%	13.16%	14.12%	13.00%
Average tangible assets <sup>(1)</sup>	0.84%	0.88%	0.84%	0.95%	0.87%
Common dividend payout ratio	39.91%	38.39%	41.88%	38.31%	42.29%
Net interest margin (fully tax-equivalent)	3.21%	3.24%	3.28%	3.50%	3.64%
Effective tax rate	22.9%	27.7%	27.1%	24.7%	32.7%
Efficiency ratio <sup>(2)</sup>	60.65%	60.95%	62.44%	59.18%	58.92%
<b>Capital ratios:</b>					
Leverage ratio <sup>(3)</sup>	8.13%	7.36%	7.41%	7.35%	7.63%
Common equity Tier 1 capital ratio <sup>(3)</sup>	10.16%	9.59%	9.77%	n/a	n/a
Tier 1 capital ratio <sup>(3)</sup>	10.74%	10.26%	10.50%	10.47%	10.82%
Total risk-based capital ratio <sup>(3)</sup>	13.19%	12.97%	13.35%	11.72%	12.08%
Average equity to average assets	8.95%	8.99%	8.86%	9.08%	9.01%
Common equity to assets	8.86%	8.16%	8.18%	8.49%	8.11%
Tangible common equity to tangible assets <sup>(1)</sup>	7.17%	6.25%	6.32%	6.41%	6.51%
<b>Asset quality:</b>					
Non-performing loans	\$ 12,531	\$ 6,326	\$ 8,440	\$ 10,153	\$ 16,622
Non-performing assets	\$ 12,679	\$ 6,433	\$ 8,603	\$ 10,347	\$ 17,083
Allowance for loan losses	\$ 34,672	\$ 30,934	\$ 27,085	\$ 27,637	\$ 26,736
Net loan charge-offs	\$ 9,623	\$ 5,789	\$ 7,933	\$ 6,888	\$ 7,057
Non-performing loans to total loans	0.46%	0.27%	0.41%		