**BAYFIRST VP ANTHONY PEREZ SELECTED AS HISPANIC MAN OF THE YEAR BY TAMPA HISPANIC HERITAGE, INC.**

**ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (August 12, 2022) –** BayFirst is proud to announce that Vice President, Commercial Lending Officer Anthony Perez has been selected as the 2022 Hispanic Man of the Year by the Board of Directors of Tampa Hispanic Heritage, Inc. Now in their 34th year, the lifetime achievement awards are presented to Hispanics who have excelled in their endeavors to advance, promote, maintain and enhance Hispanic heritage and improve the quality of life for Hispanics in the Tampa Bay area.

A 20-year banking industry veteran, Anthony is a first-generation American born to Cuban parents who was inspired by the many sacrifices his family made to give him the opportunity to succeed. As he grew, that inspiration transformed into a passion for giving back to the community and disadvantaged youth.

Anthony currently serves as Chairman of USF’s Latin Scholarship Advisory Committee where he started an annual scholarship in his grandmother’s name for Hispanic students who are the first in their family to attend college. He is also a past Chairman and a seven-year board member of the City of Tampa Mayor’s Hispanic Advisory Council, a proud supporter of the Hispanic Professional Woman’s Association, and the founder of Covered Hearts, a not-for-profit organization designed to better the lives of the less fortunate in Tampa Bay.

As a representative of BayFirst, Anthony has participated in the City of Tampa Bridges to Business Program through which he connected minority-owned, women-owned, and small business owners with resource experts. He also contributes to Hillsborough County’s Minority Business Enterprise and Small Business Enterprise Programs and is one of the driving forces behind the success of BayFirst’s Minority Owned Business Lending Program.

“Anthony has dedicated his career to giving back and making a positive difference, and we are beyond fortunate to have him on our team and representing BayFirst in the community,” said BayFirst President Tom Zernick. “We’d like to thank the Tampa Hispanic Heritage for recognizing him for all he does in support of many local causes and organizations as well as those who might dream to one day follow in his footsteps.”

Anthony will be recognized for his outstanding contributions to the Hispanic community at the Annual Tampa Hispanic Heritage, Inc. Gala on Friday, October 21, 2022, at Tampa Armature Works. The Gala is one of Tampa Hispanic Heritage, Inc.’s signature events held during Hispanic Heritage Month, bringing people in the Tampa Bay area together to celebrate the region’s rich Hispanic heritage while simultaneously raising funds towards higher education scholarships for deserving Hispanic students.

**About BayFirst National Bank**

Headquartered in St. Petersburg, BayFirst National Bank, the principal subsidiary of BayFirst Financial Corp. (NASDAQ: BAFN), operates seven banking centers in the Tampa Bay area and originates residential mortgages through a nationwide network of loan production offices. In addition, BayFirst offers a broad range of retail and business banking services, including small business loans through its SBA loan division, CreditBench, and is one of the top producing SBA lenders in the country. Since it opened in 1999, BayFirst has grown exponentially without losing sight of its commitment to making an impact in the community and being Here for What’s Next® in the lives of its customers. For more information visit: [www.BayFirstFinancial.com](http://www.BayFirstFinancial.com).

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