HBT Financial, Inc. Ranked #1 on Forbes' 2026 America's Best Banks List

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill., Feb. 18, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- HBT Financial, Inc. (NASDAQ: HBT) ("HBT Financial"), the parent company of Heartland Bank and Trust Company ("Heartland Bank"), today announced it has been ranked #1 on *Forbes'* 17th annual list of America's Best Banks. The prestigious ranking, published February 4, identifies the 100 strongest banks in the nation based on an objective analysis of 11 key metrics. The 200 largest publicly traded banks and thrifts by asset size were analyzed.

Forbes evaluated banks based on growth, credit quality, and profitability, as well as stock performance. The equally weighted metrics included net interest margin, return on equity, return on assets, capital ratios, efficiency, asset quality, and growth.

"We are incredibly proud to be recognized as the top bank in America by *Forbes*," said J. Lance Carter, President and Chief Executive Officer of HBT Financial and Heartland Bank. "This ranking is a testament to the dedication of our team, our commitment to serving our customers in Illinois and eastern Iowa, and our focus on efficient, sustainable growth."

This year's list highlights the strength of regional banks, with HBT Financial leading a group of similarly sized institutions often recognized for their operational efficiency.

About HBT Financial, Inc.

HBT Financial, Inc., headquartered in Bloomington, Illinois, is the holding company for Heartland Bank and Trust Company and has banking roots that can be traced back to 1920. HBT Financial provides a comprehensive suite of financial products and services to consumers, businesses, and municipal entities throughout Illinois and eastern Iowa through 66 full-service branches. As of December 31, 2025, HBT Financial had total assets of $5.1 billion, total loans of $3.5 billion, and total deposits of $4.4 billion.

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Forbes article can be found here:
America's Best Banks 2026: Small Banks In The Heartland Shine