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## **Eastern Bank expands franchise lending with Farwell and Blume**

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Boston, MA Eastern Bank is expanding its franchise lending group with the arrivals of senior vice president and head of specialty finance David Farwell and senior vice president of franchise finance Randi Baskin Blume. Both bring extensive expertise in franchise lending and commercial banking.

Farwell joins Eastern Bank with over 20 years of experience in specialty finance. Most recently, he served as executive vice president, head of specialty banking – franchise finance at Citizens Bank, where he built and led multiple industry-focused finance groups, including McDonald's franchise finance, general restaurant finance, retail petroleum finance and sports finance.

Blume brings 25 years of commercial lending experience including over 10 years in franchise finance, most recently serving as vice president, franchise finance – senior relationship manager at BMO Bank, N.A. There, she managed a multi-million dollar loan portfolio, specializing in Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) franchises. She was instrumental in securing BMO's designation as a McDonald's approved lender, growing the bank's McDonald's clientele from three to 50 operators in just three years. Throughout her career, Blume has been dedicated to supporting franchisees by providing tailored lending solutions and strategic financial insights.

"It is an exciting time for Eastern Bank as we build out our franchise lending offering, and we are thrilled to welcome David Farwell and Randi Baskin Blume to the team," said Greg Buscone, executive vice president, chief commercial banking officer of Eastern Bank. "David's track record of developing high-performing teams and Randi's deep industry relationships will enhance how we support franchisees – many who are multi-generational family-owned businesses – with customized banking solutions."

"Eastern Bank has a long-standing reputation for taking the time to understand the needs of its customers and how it can best support their visions, and I am excited to help expand our reach in this space," said David Farwell, senior vice president, head of Specialty Finance of Eastern Bank. "Our goal is to provide franchise operators with the financial resources and support they need to grow and succeed."

"I'm thrilled to join Eastern Bank's franchise lending team and to bring my experience in franchise finance to help clients achieve their business goals," added Randi Baskin Blume, senior vice president, Franchise Finance of Eastern Bank.

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