

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 2, 2003

For More Information  
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**FIRST CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK CHAIRMAN KICKS OFF 2003  
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN  
FOR MASON CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

MASON CITY—A \$10,000 investment made by First Citizens National Bank is the lead gift for the annual fund-raising campaign of Mason City Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC).

“Our economic development corporation has made significant strides in the last few years in positioning Mason City as a logical location for business to locate and expand. I look to major expansions like Sunny Fresh Foods, Kraft Foods, and I.C. System as a great indicator of the MCEDC’s responsiveness to existing industry. At the same time, I am encouraged by the continuous activity we see in light of a soft economy as a positive sign of the development group moving in the right direction. Couple this with the airport, our highway access, the strong rail service we have along with a variety of developed sites and facilities and I am confident that great things can continue to happen.”

Tomson, currently a member of the MCEDC board of directors and a past officer of the organization, encourages other local businesses to give serious consideration to an investment in the MCEDC effort. “I see this as an investment versus a donation because the MCEDC is the group principally responsible for raising the image of the Mason City region as an exceptional place to locate or expand and grow a business.”

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## **2-2-2-2 Lead Investment From FIRST CITIZENS Kicks Off Campaign for MCEDC**

Volunteers will begin contacting Mason City businesses in April to explain the work of MCEDC seeking investments for the annual campaign, which funds the operating costs of the corporation.

MCEDC Development Specialist Ken Bales points to recent accomplishments as a reason for the business community to support the efforts of the economic development group. In 2002, the corporation secured the expansion of Sunny Fresh Foods \$10 million addition, partnered with the Clear Lake Economic Development Corporation to bring Alliant Energy's \$400 million electric generation plant to Cerro Gordo County, landed the Golden Grain Energy ethanol plant that will break ground this year investing \$55 million creating 30+ jobs, and assisted I.C. Systems in their expansion to a new office building they will move into this summer in Indianhead Park that will create an additional 200 jobs and add another \$2 million in new investment to the Mason City community .

“MCEDC is really the driving engine for advanced economic growth in our community,” says Bales. “I have a very strong feeling about that and the need for our community to support this effort because of the impact we can have on the entire North Iowa region.”

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### **3-3-3-3 Lead Investment From FIRST CITIZENS Kicks Off Campaign for MCEDC**

This year's goal is \$135,000. The 2002 campaign brought in over \$115,000 eclipsing last year's goal of \$100,000. The money is used for existing business retention and new business marketing efforts. MCEDC utilizes industry publications and trade shows to promote the strategic advantages of a business location in Mason City.

MCEDC maintains extensive databases in order to provide existing and prospective employers with information on sites and buildings as well as labor availability and financial incentives. Additionally, the MCEDC continues to seek mutually beneficial regional partnerships, such as a growing relationship with the Clear Lake Economic Development Corporation, which will enhance the economy of the greater North Iowa region.

First Citizens National Bank is chartered in Mason City and employs 220 people in its 12 offices in 10 North Iowa communities. With \$760,000,000 in assets, First Citizens National Bank is the largest independent community bank in the North Iowa region. First Citizens Trust Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the bank, has over \$325 million in assets under administration.

Businesses or individuals interested in more information about the work of Mason City Economic Development Corporation, or the capital campaign, should call 423-5724.

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