



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BERKSHIRE BANK FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW ONLINE GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS
Application will streamline process for non-profits

PITTSFIELD, MASS. January 11, 2011 – Berkshire Bank Foundation announced the initiation of its new online grant application for non-profit organizations seeking grant funds. The new online application will help streamline the grant application process while providing the Foundation with a good understanding of proposed projects so they can be fairly evaluated and ranked. It will also allow the Foundation to better track and monitor the grant review process.

Designed by Bridgeline Digital, the new online grant application will allow non-profit organizations to fill out the application form, attach any required documentation, and submit the application in one smooth step at Berkshire Bank's website, www.berkshirebank.com. This will eliminate the need for non-profit organizations to mail in applications and supporting documentation to the Foundation office. **All grant requests must now be submitted through this new online tool.**

"We feel that this new online application process will make it easier for non-profits to apply for grants from the Foundation, and will improve communications and help speed up the review process," says Peter J Lafayette, Executive Director of the Berkshire Bank Foundation. "Our staff will work with applicants when questions arise, especially in this initial year."

While this online grant application process is new, the Foundation's priorities remain the same: funding educational programs and community/economic development projects that enhance opportunities for people in the Bank's market areas of Berkshire County, the Pioneer Valley in Massachusetts, as well as communities in New York State and Southern Vermont.

More information on Berkshire Bank Foundation's grant application guidelines as well as their new online grant application can be found at www.berkshirebank.com/foundation. Non-Profit organizations with questions regarding the new online grant application are encouraged to call the Foundation's office at 413-447-1724

####

BACKGROUND

Berkshire Bank Foundation, the charitable arm of Berkshire Bank, [America's Most Exciting BankSM](#), is a leader in philanthropy and community involvement. The Foundation's mission is to enhance the quality of life in Berkshire Bank's service areas by providing priority funding to education and community development projects. It also funds programs dedicated to the arts, education, and human services. Since its foundation in 2000, it has awarded more than \$14 million to non-profit organizations in its service area. For more information, visit www.berkshirebank.com/foundation, "Like" them on www.facebook.com/BerkshireBank or call Peter J. Lafayette, Executive Director.

Berkshire Hills Bancorp is the parent of Berkshire Bank - [America's Most Exciting BankSM](#). The Company has \$2.8 billion in assets and 41 full service financial centers in Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont. Berkshire Bank provides 100% deposit insurance protection for all deposit accounts, regardless of amount, based on a combination of FDIC insurance and the [Depositors Insurance Fund](#) (DIF). For more information, visit www.berkshirebank.com or call 800-773-5601.

Media Contacts:

Elizabeth Mach
Berkshire Bank, AVP Marketing
emach@berkshirebank.com
413-445-8390

Peter J. Lafayette
Foundation Executive Director
plafayette@berkshirebank.com
(413) 281-3126(c)