



## FIRST WESTERN

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### **FIRST WESTERN FINANCIAL EXPANDS EXECUTIVE TEAM TO KEEP PACE WITH RAPID GROWTH**

*Denver-Based Firm Successfully Recruits Executives To Fill New Positions*

**Denver, CO—March 18, 2009**—First Western Financial, Inc. the premier wealth management company in the West, announced today that John Shope and Melissa Montgomery-Fitzsimmons have joined the firm, filling two new leadership positions.

Mr. Shope will assume the role of Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing, for First Western Financial, Inc., where he will be responsible for overseeing the firm's expanding sales and service infrastructure as well as managing the Bank's marketing efforts. He was most recently with Executive Resorts in Denver where he was Executive Vice President of Worldwide Sales. Mr. Shope brings more than 20 years of experience in the financial services industry to First Western, including senior positions with Wachovia Bank, Mellon Bank, Bank of America, and AllianceBernstein L.P..

Ms. Montgomery-Fitzsimmons steps in to the new position of Director of Wealth Planning where she will be responsible for managing the organization's overall wealth planning effort, including coordination of all wealth management services at the Bank's individual offices. She comes to First Western from JP Morgan in Denver, where she was Vice President, Wealth Advisor. Previously, Ms. Montgomery-Fitzsimmons had been a practicing attorney specializing in wealth transfer and tax strategies. She has been in the estate planning and financial planning industry for 19 years.

"Melissa and John bring a deep knowledge of wealth management to First Western and we are thrilled to have them join us," said First Western Trust Bank Founder and CEO Scott Wylie. "They are the right people at the right time for the firm and their abilities will go a long way toward accelerating and managing the organic growth of First Western."

The successful recruitment of the two executives is the latest in a series of important hires for Colorado-based First Western. The firm, which recently opened offices in Scottsdale, Arizona and in the Denver Tech Center, completed the acquisition of Ryder, Stilwell, Incorporated, a Los Angeles-based investment management firm, in November.

First Western Trust Bank has established itself as a leader in the wealth management industry in the western United States. In addition to the new operations, First Western has offices in downtown Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins, and Cherry Creek that specialize in serving the needs of the entrepreneurial spirit of the West.

**About First Western Financial, Inc.**

First Western Financial, Inc., the holding company of First Western Trust Bank and First Western Investment Management was recently ranked as one of Inc. 500's fastest growing private companies in the United States and the fastest growing banking institution in the country. With \$2.2 billion currently in Affiliate assets under management, First Western fields a team of experienced professionals to deliver personalized wealth management solutions for each individual client. First Western Trust Bank, the West's premier private bank and trust company, is the only private bank to comprehensively integrate private banking, investment management, personal trust and wealth planning for high net worth individuals and their families. For more information, please visit [www.fwtb.com](http://www.fwtb.com), or call 303-531-8100.

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