Banker’s mantra: Quality, growth, profitability

By Kat Greene

Staff Writer

In any given morning, you can find Crawford running through Buckhead.

The discipline and leadership it takes to run marathons informs how Crawford runs Private Bank of Buckhead, where he’s president, CEO and chairman.

Crawford started the bank in December 2001, after just a few months of capital raising, he started the bank. It was $3.5 million more than was required by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

It’s Crawford’s third bank. His first was The Buckhead Bank, in 1996, and then in 2001, he started Riverside Bank of Buckhead. In 2005, when he decided to start a new bank, he worked largely from home and from coffee shops around the city to organize what would eventually become a board of 12 directors.

The world into which the bank was born was one on the brink of disaster. When Lehman Brothers failed in September 2008, it took the markets and the credit ratings of many in the financial industry with it.

But the seasoned, athletic man at the helm of Private Bank of Buckhead doesn’t exude the coolly sophisticated air of a banker, and he didn’t act like some bankers did, says friends.

“He’s not like the typical banker of yesteryear who for the most part would be stern and sophisticated in a way that could scare you,” said friend and former Atlanta Mayor Sam Massell. “He’s got the magic appearance of being youthful but also mature.”

Crawford’s father was a broadcaster for CNN, and that’s the impression you get also mature.”

The two worked together for CNN, and that’s the impression you get.

Crawford gathered his team around him and stuck to his principles to help guide the bank through the worldwide financial disaster.

“He’s something of a coach, say friends. “He shows his team the good life, then helps them get across that goal,” said Flynn. Crawford, who was a first-year student at the University of Pennsylvania while obtaining two undergraduate degrees, says he agrees that some of the same principles that apply to sports can translate well into banking.

Crawford started tennis after high school andDuring the summers in college. There, he learned how to manage relationships.

“A lot of what I learned when I was new, translating into the business that I work in, in coaching the people I work with,” he said.

Crawford’s third bank Private Bank of Buckhead

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

CHARLIE CRAWFORD

Age: 48

Born in: Fort Belvoir Army Hospital, Va.

Lives in: Buckhead

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from the University of Pennsylvania and the Wharton School of Business; Georgia State University; graduate, LSU School of Banking and Leadership Atlanta (2008)

Current job: President, CEO and chairman, Private Bank of Buckhead

Prior jobs: Bankers Trust Co. in New York; 10 years with Bank South, Atlanta; The Buckhead Bank; Venable, Banks of Buckhead

Family: Wife, Ansley Byers Crawford; three children

Hobbies: Running, avid tennis player, community service

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