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## **Canadian Western Bank celebrates 25 years of success**

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History defined by consistent growth and performance in all economic environments

EDMONTON, March 23, 2009 - Canadian Western Bank (TSX: CWB) (CWB or ‘the Bank’) celebrates 25 years of success in partnering with businesses and individuals across Western Canada. CWB first became a Schedule I chartered bank on March 22, 1984 under its original name, the Bank of Alberta.

"The Bank was initially formed in response to opportunities brought about by challenging economic times that prompted many competitors to reign in their exposure in key western markets," said Larry Pollock, President and Chief Executive Officer of CWB. "In some respects, the economic environment today is very similar to what we faced 25 years ago. And just like then, our Bank continues to prudently lend and grow despite challenges related to ongoing global economic turmoil. CWB has demonstrated success in all economic conditions over the past quarter century and I am confident we will continue to build on this long history."

The Bank of Alberta commenced operations under the vision of Dr. Charles Allard and Eugene Pechet, starting with three employees working out of an office located in one of Mr. Pechet’s hotels in Edmonton, Alberta. In 1988, the Bank of Alberta amalgamated with Western & Pacific Bank to become CWB. Through strong organic growth and a series of acquisitions and partnerships, CWB has grown exponentially to become Canadian Western Bank Group (CWB Group).

"Our founders vision was to build a western-based financial institution that focused on exceptional customer service, disciplined underwriting practices and solid long-term growth," commented Pollock. "Twenty-five years later, I am proud that we continue to realize this promise. Notwithstanding our history of success, CWB is still in the early stages towards realizing its potential. Our proven business plan, solid financial position, dedicated employees and excellent clients have us positioned for continued success. I could not be more excited about the promising future that lies ahead for the CWB Group."

Today, CWB Group is comprised of the Bank, as well as subsidiaries Canadian Western Trust Company, Valiant Trust Company, Canadian Direct Insurance Incorporated and Adroit Investment Management Ltd. CWB recently reported its 83rd consecutive profitable quarter (nearly 21 years), and has achieved 19 consecutive years of double-digit loan growth. With 36 client-focused branches and over 1,300 employees, it is now the largest publicly traded Schedule I chartered bank headquartered in Western Canada. After starting with \$31 million of initial capital, the Bank currently has total balance sheet assets of almost \$11 billion, assets under administration of over \$4 billion and assets under management approaching \$1 billion.

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