

TOP WOMEN IN FINANCE

JULIA SCHREIFELS

THE BANK OF ELK RIVER

Over a decade ago, Julia Schreifels decided to join The Bank of Elk River after witnessing a warm interaction between a bank employee and a customer in the lobby.

“I came down the stairs after my second interview and saw a staff member laughing with customers. It made me realize this is the type of work environment I was looking for,” Schreifels said. Later, she discovered the employee was the bank’s president.

Schreifels got the marketing and communications director job and began remaking how the bank reached out to customers, starting with a comprehensive upgrade of the bank’s online presence. The initiative modernized the website, enhanced social media outreach and optimized search engine visibility. The effort broadened the bank’s audience, streamlined operations, and significantly improved customer satisfaction.

As technology advanced, Schreifels introduced voice search capabilities and an omnichannel strategy to ensure consistent and integrated customer experience. “Embracing technological advancements and a multi-channel strategy is crucial for remaining relevant and competing with large, national banks,” Schreifels said.

The enhanced online presence attracted a younger demographic and retained long-standing customers who appreciate the blend of traditional banking values with modern convenience. Feedback from the community has been overwhelmingly positive as customers cite personalized service as key differentiators in a crowded market.

More recently, Schreifels focused on reinforcing the bank’s core mission by stressing a people-first approach, trust-building, excellence, and community engagement. It cultivated a culture of support and involvement within the organization and the northwestern metro.

“I love the challenge,” she said of her job. “I love the diversity of the role and working with my amazing team and colleagues to help local businesses grow and families thrive.”

Schreifels works with several nonprofit organizations, including serving on the board of directors for the CAER Food Shelf. “Volunteering is not just about giving back; it’s about connecting with your community and making a tangible difference,” she said.

