
**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20549**

FORM 8-K

**CURRENT REPORT
Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d)
of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934**

Date of report (Date of earliest event reported): January 14, 2025

LAKELAND FINANCIAL CORPORATION
(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

Indiana
(State or other jurisdiction
of incorporation)

0-11487
(Commission
File Number)

35-1559596
(IRS Employer
Identification No.)

**202 East Center Street,
Warsaw , Indiana**
(Address of principal executive offices)

46580
(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (574) 267-6144

(Former name or former address if changed since last report.)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

<u>Title of each class</u>	<u>Trading Symbol(s)</u>	<u>Name of each exchange on which registered</u>
Common Stock, no par value	LKFN	NASDAQ

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933 (s230.405 of this chapter) or Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (s240.12b-2 of this chapter).

Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the Registrant has elected not to use extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

Item 5.02. Departure of Directors or Certain Officers; Election of Directors; Appointment of Certain Officers; Compensatory Arrangements of Certain Officers

On January 16, 2025, Lakeland Financial Corporation (the "Company") announced that Stephanie R. Leniski, age 50, was appointed an Executive Vice President and the Chief Retail Banking Officer of the Company and Lake City Bank (the "Bank"), the Company's wholly owned subsidiary, effective January 15, 2025. Ms. Leniski joined the Bank in 2002 as Vice President and Manager of the Elkhart East office, was promoted to North Region Retail Banking Manager in 2012, was promoted to Senior Vice President, Retail Banking Manager in 2017, and was most recently promoted to lead the Retail Banking division in 2019. In compensation for her service, Ms. Leniski will receive an annual salary and shall be entitled to participate in all compensation and benefit plans available to the executive officers of the Company and the Bank pursuant to the terms of such plans.

The press release relating to Ms. Leniski's appointment issued on January 16, 2025 is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits

(d) Exhibits

[99.1 Press Release issued by Lakeland Financial Corporation and Lake City Bank on January 16, 2025](#)

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

LAKELAND FINANCIAL CORPORATION

Dated: January 16, 2025

By: /s/ Lisa M. O'Neill
Lisa M. O'Neill
Executive Vice President
and Chief Financial Officer

NEWS FROM LAKE CITY BANK
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lake City Bank Promotes Stephanie R. Leniski to Executive Vice President

Warsaw, Indiana (January 16, 2025) – Lake City Bank is pleased to announce that Stephanie R. Leniski has been promoted to Executive Vice President, Chief Retail Banking Officer.

“Stephanie’s energy for the business, accompanied by her ability to effectively manage and motivate our retail team, makes her a strong leader,” said David M. Findlay, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. “She’s strategic in the decisions she makes and represents a thoughtful leader of the business. Her balanced approach ensures we take care of clients, each other, community members, and shareholders at the same time.”

Leniski’s 30-year career in banking started as a teller in 1995. She joined Lake City Bank in 2002 as Vice President and Manager of the Elkhart East office. She was promoted to North Region Retail Banking Manager in 2012 and to Senior Vice President, Retail Banking Manager in 2017. She was further promoted to lead the Retail Banking division in 2019.

“I’m honored by this promotion and excited to continue leading our strong Retail Banking team alongside our dedicated group of Regional Managers,” said Leniski. “How we take care of our customers evolves with technology and we will continue innovating to deliver banking solutions our clients need and want, while staying committed to our principles of building face-to-face relationships and engaging our communities.”

Leniski is responsible for oversight of the bank’s 54 offices and 286 Retail Banking team members. She leads Retail product innovations and drives initiatives for the division, serving on numerous bank committees and task forces. She co-leads the Branch Development Committee and plays a vital role determining the strategic expansion of Lake City Bank’s branch network.

Leniski earned her bachelor’s degree in economics and business administration with concentrations in accounting and international business from Saint Mary’s College. She also has her master’s in business administration from Bethel College and is a graduate of the American Bankers Association Stonier Graduate School of Banking. She serves on the Indiana Bankers Association’s Retail Banking Committee, as secretary on the ETHOS Innovation Center Board of Directors and as treasurer on the Bridges of Michiana, Inc. Board of Directors.

Lake City Bank, a \$6.6 billion bank headquartered in Warsaw, Indiana, was founded in 1872 and serves Central and Northern Indiana communities with 54 branch offices and a robust digital banking platform. Lake City Bank's community banking model prioritizes building in-market long-term customer relationships while delivering technology-forward solutions for retail and commercial clients. The bank is the single bank subsidiary of Lakeland Financial Corporation (Nasdaq Global Select/LKFN). For more information visit www.lakecitybank.com.

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