



Jack Guynn, Atlanta Fed president and chief executive officer (right), and Pat Barron, first vice president and chief operating officer

Message from the President

In the forty years that I have been working at the Atlanta Fed, the U.S. economy and financial system have grown more complex with every passing year. Throughout this evolution the Federal Reserve has changed dramatically too. What was once an ordinary day for an everyday employee has exploded into workplace demands that we couldn't foresee years ago. And extraordinary circumstances and events—international threats and unrest, the perks and pitfalls of a global computer network, and the unpredictable and uncontrollable forces of nature—test us daily.

For our staff, change also comes in the form of relentless innovation and cost pressures that continue to reshape the financial services industry, including the Fed. We are asking more of each worker—retraining, retooling, and rethinking the processes that have worked well in the past.

I can say, however, that as we meet and manage change, we hold on to the core corporate values that have served us over time. Chief among these guiding principles is our dedication to excellence, day after day and year after year.

The Fed, as a system, has responded aggressively to change with more collaboration among Reserve Banks. The twelve banks continually look for opportunities to become more efficient and more effective in the way we do business. For example, the Fed in 2004 developed a check reengineering plan in response to the declining use of paper checks. That plan, to date, has required the Federal Reserve to reduce the number of its check processing locations while continuing to provide a nationwide service.

As our organization has become more responsive and nimble, our employees have developed new and better skills. The number of employees with advanced degrees

and specialty training at the Atlanta Fed has never been higher, yet we are doing more work with fewer people. In fact, our Sixth Federal Reserve District payroll has declined from more than 2,400 in 1999 to about 2,100 at the end of 2004.

Some of these adjustments have been difficult, but the Atlanta Fed must ensure its strategy, tactics, and workforce continue to evolve to fulfill our unique public mission. And that mission is to help formulate and implement sound monetary policy, to provide stringent supervision of financial institutions, and to supply top-quality payment services.

Ultimately, our success depends on each person and the day-to-day attention to detail they provide, and I am pleased by what we were able to accomplish across our organization in 2004.

The people you will see on the following pages are just a few examples of the kind of dedicated employees required to meet the very special responsibilities and high expectations of the Federal Reserve. The essays tell the business side of the story, but our people complete the picture.

While the Atlanta Fed had a solid year in 2004, there is no time to pause and reflect on our accomplishments. Many challenges are ahead, and every day on the job requires unrelenting focus and execution for the Atlanta Fed to keep pace with a changing economy and financial system.



Jack Guynn