Alamerica Bank rated 'superior'

Birmingham's Alamerica Bank was the only hometown bank to receive a "superior" rating in a study of the financial condition of banks across the nation. Research firm BauerFinancial Inc. gave Alamerica five stars based on the bank's capital ratio and other factors including profitability/loss trend, delinquent loans and investment portfolio value ending Sept. 30. Other Alabama banks with branches in the metro area - Tuscaloosa's Bryant Bank, Calera-based Central State Bank, and Pell City's Metro and Union State banks - also received five stars. Regions Financial Corp., Compass and Wachovia Corp. received four stars, or an "excellent" rating. Bauer has noted it requires high levels of capital for its five-star rating. Many larger banks choose to keep less capital on hand.

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