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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Communities First Financial Corporation Establishes New Los Angeles Commercial Lending Team; Dave Anderson, Karen Kim and Veronica Carrera Launch Loan Production Office in Torrance, California

Fresno, CA – September 18, 2018 –Communities First Financial Corporation (the “Company”) (OTCQX: CFST), the parent company of Fresno First Bank (the “Bank”), today announced that a new commercial lending team has joined the Bank, expanding its presence in Southern California. Dave Anderson, Executive Vice President and Regional Credit Head and Karen Kim, Senior Vice President, Regional Sales Director, will lead the commercial lending team joined by Veronica Carrera, Vice President, Senior Loan Administrator. This team of seasoned bankers has previously worked together for close to 10 years in the greater Southern California marketplace.

“We are excited about increasing our lending capabilities by expanding into Southern California. This high-growth market is a perfect fit for our strategic direction,” said Steve Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer. “Our team will be focusing on commercial lending. In the near future, however, we will look to expand our merchant services team through our new Southern California office.”

“We are delighted to welcome Dave, Karen and Veronica to Fresno First Bank,” continued Miller. “With more than 40 years in commercial, commercial real estate and multi-family lending, the team brings a wealth of financial experience to our franchise. Each will be an outstanding addition to our growing team of commercial lending professionals, and we look forward to leveraging their extensive skill-set to better service the needs of our customers.” The Commercial Lending office is located at the Gateway Towers East at 970 West 190th Street, Suite 520, Torrance, CA 90502. Dave and the rest of the team can be reached at 213.225.6254 and 213.225.6253 or by email at danderson@fresnofirstbank.com, or kkim@fresnofirstbank.com.

Formerly with Grandpoint Bank, Dave Anderson managed top-performing teams, specializing in commercial real estate, C&I and credit administration for 26 years in Southern California. He will be responsible for leading his team and developing new business in the greater Los Angeles market. Dave graduated from California State University Long Beach with a degree in Business Administration. “Our lending team is very excited to join such a progressive and forward-looking bank.” said Dave Anderson, Executive Vice President.

Karen Kim specializes in multi-family lending and has spent 15 years in banking, primarily in the Southern California market. Karen has a strong diversified background in banking, most recently as a commercial real estate lender serving Southern and Central California. She graduated from the University of California Santa Barbara with an Economics degree.

Veronica Carrera most recently was an assistant relationship and support manager with Anderson’s commercial lending team. With approximately 21 years of experience in customer service and support, she is also a vital member of the team.

About Communities First Financial Corporation

Communities First Financial Corporation, a bank holding company established in 2014, is the parent company of Fresno First Bank, founded in 2005 in Fresno, California. Fresno First Bank is a leading SBA Lender in California’s Central Valley. The Bank was named to the Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing Companies list in 2017 and to Forbes Best 25 Small Businesses in America for 2016. Additional information is available from the Company’s website at www.fresnofirstbank.com or call 559-439-0200.

Forward Looking Statement Disclaimer

This earnings release may contain forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements provide current expectations or forecasts of future events and are not guarantees of future performance, nor should they be relied upon as representing management's views as of any subsequent date. The forward-looking statements are based on managements' expectations and are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties. Although management believes that the expectations reflected in such forward-looking statements are reasonable, actual results may differ materially from those expressed or implied in such statements. Risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially include, without limitation, the Company's ability to effectively execute its business plans; changes in general economic and financial market conditions; changes in interest rates; changes in the competitive environment; continuing consolidation in the financial services industry; new litigation or changes in existing litigation; losses, customer bankruptcy, claims and assessments; changes in banking regulations or other regulatory or legislative requirements affecting the Company's business; international developments; and changes in accounting policies or procedures as may be required by the Financial Accounting Standards Board or other regulatory agencies. The Company undertakes no obligation to release publicly the results of any revisions to the forward-looking statements included herein to reflect events or circumstances after today, or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events. The Company claims the protection of the safe harbor for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

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Note: Transmitted on Globenewswire on September 18, 2018, at 6:00 a.m. Pacific time