



## **First Niagara Names Inder Koul as Chief Information Officer**

### **Jeff Semonovich Promoted to Senior IT Post**

BUFFALO, N.Y., November 28, 2012 – First Niagara Financial Group, Inc. (NASDAQ:FNFG) named Inder Koul to serve as the regional bank’s Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer (CIO), and promoted Jeff Semonovich to serve as Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Enterprise Services and IT Program Governance, reporting to Koul.

Koul is responsible for providing vision and leadership in developing and implementing all information technology strategy and initiatives to serve First Niagara’s more than 6,000 employees and its customers across four states. He will be based at the company’s headquarters in Buffalo.

“Inder is a business-minded CIO with proven leadership skills that align extremely well with our future plans,” said Gary Crosby, Chief Operating Officer. “As we continue to build and enhance a comprehensive suite of products and services for our customers in all lines of business, technology is a key enabler of that strategy.

“These leadership changes will help First Niagara to continue to drive profitable growth by meeting and exceeding the sophisticated technology needs of our customers and employees,” said Crosby.

Koul noted, “First Niagara has a great suite of products and services for our customers. The company is committed to deepening those customer relationships and improving service through innovative technology. I look forward to being part of this strong technology team that is quickly becoming one of the best in the business.”

Koul joins First Niagara from Huntington Bancshares, Inc., where he most-recently served in the roles of the CIO for the bank’s Commercial, Auto Finance and Corporate Services groups, and as the Director of Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO). Prior to Huntington, he was with Bank of America for seven years in a variety of senior executive positions, including business processing, operations, customer service and IT program management roles. He led integrated solutions delivery and supervised operations in areas such as Small Business, Wealth and Global Customer Service & Support. Earlier in his career, he worked on delivery of large-scale program implementations at IBM, KPMG Consulting, Verizon, Morgan Stanley and Citibank UK.

Koul graduated from India’s elite BITS Pilani University with a bachelor’s degree in Electronics Engineering.

Prior to his new role, Semonovich served as the company's Senior Vice President, Solutions Delivery Director since 2010. Before joining First Niagara, he was Senior Vice President of Information Systems with PNC Financial Services Group, as well as Senior Vice President, CIO of Asset Management Technology at National City Corporation. He is a graduate of the University of Akron.

### **About First Niagara**

First Niagara, through its wholly owned subsidiary, First Niagara Bank, N.A., is a multi-state community-oriented bank with approximately 430 branches, \$36 billion in assets, \$28 billion in deposits, and approximately 6,000 employees providing financial services to individuals, families and businesses across Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. For more information, visit [www.firstniagara.com](http://www.firstniagara.com).

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### **First Niagara Contacts**

#### Investors:

Ram Shankar  
Senior Vice President, Investor Relations  
(716) 270-8623  
ram.shankar@fnfg.com

#### News Media:

David Lanzillo  
Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications  
(716) 819-5780  
david.lanzillo@fnfg.com