

LANCASTER NEW ERA

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Community First Fund in Top 4

Lancaster's Community First Fund on Tuesday was named one of four semi-finalists for a \$2.75 million Wachovia NEXT Award.

The new award program recognizes small economic development loan funds that help finance affordable housing, small businesses growth and the construction of public facilities.

The awards are being offered by Opportunity Finance Network and sponsored by the Wachovia Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. McArthur Foundation.

The Community First Fund, based at 30 W. Orange St., serves 13 Central Pennsylvania counties by providing business counseling and training and loans to new and emerging small businesses and community organizations. The Community First Fund provides more than 100 loans a year with a loan fund of nearly \$8 million.

The semifinalist announcement was made by the Opportunity Finance Network. The list of four will be halved through a second selection process by the end of this month. The winner will be announced in December.

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