

First Western Reports First Quarter 2019 Financial Results

First Quarter 2019 Summary

- Net income available to common shareholders of \$1.6 million in Q1 2019, compared to net income available to common shareholders of \$0.6 million in Q1 2018
- Diluted EPS of \$0.21 in Q1 2019, compared to \$0.22 in Q4 2018, and \$0.11 in Q1 2018
- Gross loans, excluding loans held for sale, of \$931.2 million, a 16.7% annualized increase from Q4 2018 and a 13.9% increase from Q1 2018
- Total deposits of \$978.1 million, a 17.2% annualized increase from Q4 2018 and a 19.5% increase from Q1 2018
- Efficiency ratio of 83.2%, compared to 80.6% in Q4 2018, and 89.1% in Q1 2018

Denver, Colo., April 25, 2019 – First Western Financial, Inc., ("First Western" or the "Company") (NASDAQ: MYFW), a financial services holding company, today reported financial results for the first quarter ended March 31, 2019.

For the first quarter of 2019, net income available to common shareholders was \$1.6 million, or \$0.21 per diluted share. This compares to \$1.7 million, or \$0.22 per diluted share, for the fourth quarter of 2018, and \$0.6 million, or \$0.11 per share, for the first quarter of 2018, which included \$0.6 million of preferred stock dividends. The preferred stock was redeemed in the third quarter of 2018.

"We delivered another solid quarter driven by continued improvement in our business development efforts," said Scott C. Wylie, CEO of First Western. "The value proposition of our 'one-stop-shop' model is helping to attract new customers to First Western, which resulted in strong balance sheet growth and solid inflows of assets under management during the first quarter. Our loan production continues to be well diversified, with significant growth in all of our major portfolios with the exception of commercial real estate. Our new business pipeline remains strong and we expect to deliver a steady increase in profitability as we move through 2019, driven by continued quality balance sheet growth, higher non-interest income, and further improvement in operating efficiencies."

	For the Three Months Ended						
	March 31,		December 31,		N	larch 31,	
(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)		2019	2018			2018	
Earnings Summary							
Net interest income	\$	7,971	\$	7,899	\$	7,360	
Less: Provision for (recovery of) credit losses		194		349		(187)	
Total non-interest income		6,976		6,351		7,292	
Total non-interest expense		12,602		11,649		13,286	
Income before income taxes		2,151		2,252		1,553	
Income tax expense		524		528		367	
Net income		1,627		1,724		1,186	
Preferred stock dividends						(561)	
Net income available to common shareholders	\$	1,627	\$	1,724	\$	625	
Basic and diluted earnings per common share	\$	0.21	\$	0.22	\$	0.11	
Return on average assets		0.57 %	ó	0.66 %)	0.48 %	
Return on average shareholders' equity		5.50 %	Ď	5.98 %)	4.59 %	
Return on tangible common equity ⁽¹⁾		6.88 %	Ď	7.52 %)	4.68 %	
Net interest margin		3.03 %	ó	3.29 %)	3.25 %	
Efficiency ratio ⁽¹⁾		83.15 %	ó	80.60 %)	89.11 %	

(1) Represents a Non-GAAP financial measure. See "Reconciliation of Non-GAAP Measures" for a reconciliation of our Non-GAAP measures to the most directly comparable GAAP financial measure.

Operating Results for the First Quarter 2019

Revenue

Gross revenue (total income before non-interest expense, plus provision for credit losses) was \$14.9 million for the first quarter of 2019, compared to \$14.3 million for the fourth quarter of 2018. The increase in revenue was primarily driven by a \$0.6 million increase in non-interest income, due to an increase in mortgage activity.

Relative to the first quarter of 2018, gross revenue increased \$0.3 million from \$14.7 million. The increase was primarily attributable to a \$0.6 million increase in net interest income, partially offset by a \$0.3 million decrease in non-interest income.

Net Interest Income

Net interest income for the first quarter of 2019 was \$8.0 million, compared to \$7.9 million for the fourth quarter of 2018. The increase in net interest income from the fourth quarter of 2018 was primarily attributable to higher average loan balances.

Relative to the first quarter of 2018, net interest income increased 8.3% from \$7.4 million. The increase in net interest income from the first quarter of 2018 was primarily driven by higher average loan balances.

Net Interest Margin

Net interest margin for the first quarter of 2019 decreased to 3.03% from 3.29% in the fourth quarter of 2018. The decrease was due to an 11 basis point decrease in the average yield on interest earning assets, from 4.31% to 4.20%, driven by an unfavorable shift in the mix of earning assets and from a 17 basis point increase in the average cost of funds, from 1.06% to 1.23%. The increase in cost of funds was driven by rapid

growth in higher-cost trust and large client deposits beginning in the fourth quarter of 2018, which continued into the first quarter of 2019.

Relative to the first quarter of 2018, the net interest margin decreased to 3.03% from 3.25%, due to a 22 basis point increase in the average yield on interest earning assets, offset by a 49 basis point increase in the average cost of funds.

Non-interest Income

Non-interest income for the first quarter of 2019 was \$7.0 million, an increase of 9.8% from \$6.4 million in the fourth quarter of 2018. The increase was primarily attributable to higher net gains on mortgage loans sold as a result of a higher volume of mortgages sold in the first quarter of 2019.

Non-interest income decreased 4.3% from \$7.3 million in the first quarter of 2018, primarily as a result of a \$0.3 million decrease in trust and investment management fees and a \$0.3 million decrease in bank fees, which were partially offset by a \$0.2 million increase in net gains from mortgage loans sold.

Non-interest Expense

Non-interest expense for the first quarter of 2019 was \$12.6 million, an increase of 8.2% from \$11.6 million for the fourth quarter of 2018. The increase was primarily attributable to a \$0.9 million increase in salaries and employee benefits expense resulting from an increase in increase in increase and payroll taxes.

Non-interest expense decreased 5.1% from \$13.3 million in the first quarter of 2018, primarily due to lower salary and employee benefits expense as a result of streamlining the cost structure in certain areas of the Company.

The Company's efficiency ratio was 83.2% in the first quarter of 2019, compared with 80.6% in the fourth quarter of 2018 and 89.1% in the first quarter of 2018.

Income Taxes

The Company recorded income tax expense of \$0.5 million for the first quarter of 2019, representing an effective tax rate of 24.4%, compared to 23.4% for the fourth quarter of 2018.

Loan Portfolio

Gross loans, excluding mortgage loans held for sale, totaled \$931.2 million at March 31, 2019, compared to \$894.0 million at December 31, 2018 and \$817.3 million at March 31, 2018. The increase in gross loans from December 31, 2018 was attributable to growth in all of the Company's major loan categories with the exception of commercial real estate.

Deposits

Total deposits were \$978.1 million at March 31, 2019, compared to \$937.8 million at December 31, 2018, and \$818.2 million at March 31, 2018. The increase in total deposits from December 31, 2018 was due primarily to an increase in non-interest bearing and money market deposits.

Assets Under Management

Total assets under management increased by \$546.1 million during the first quarter to \$5.78 billion at March 31, 2019, compared to \$5.24 billion at December 31, 2018, and \$5.36 billion at March 31, 2018. The increase was attributed to market volatility resulting in an increase of \$575.3 million which was partially offset by net client outflows of \$29.2 million in the first quarter of 2019.

Credit Quality

Non-performing assets totaled \$19.4 million, or 1.69% of total assets, at March 31, 2019, a slight decrease from \$19.7 million, or 1.82% of total assets, at December 31, 2018.

The Company recorded zero net charge-offs in the first quarter.

The Company recorded a provision for loan losses of \$0.2 million for the first quarter of 2019, primarily attributable to the growth in the loan portfolio.

Capital

At March 31, 2019, First Western ("Consolidated") and First Western Trust ("Bank") exceeded the minimum capital levels required by their respective regulators. At March 31, 2019, the Bank was classified as "well capitalized", as summarized in the following table:

	<u>March 31,</u> 2019
Consolidated Capital	2019
Common Equity Tier 1(CET1) to risk-weighted assets	11.13 %
Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets	11.13 %
Total capital to risk-weighted assets	12.78 %
Tier 1 capital to average assets	8.67 %
Bank Capital	
Common Equity Tier 1(CET1) to risk-weighted assets	10.36 %
Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets	10.36 %
Total capital to risk-weighted assets	11.26 %
Tier 1 capital to average assets	8.07 %

Conference Call, Webcast and Slide Presentation

The Company will host a conference call and webcast at 9:00 a.m. MT/ 11:00 p.m. ET on Friday, April 26, 2019. The call can be accessed via telephone at 877-405-1628; passcode 1193649. A recorded replay will be accessible through May 3, 2019 by dialing 855-859-2056; passcode 1193649.

A slide presentation relating to the first quarter 2019 results will be accessible prior to the scheduled conference call. The slide presentation and webcast of the conference call can be accessed on the Events and Presentations page of the Company's investor relations website at https://myfw.gcs-web.com.

About First Western Financial Inc.

First Western Financial, Inc. is a financial services holding company headquartered in Denver, Colorado, with operations in Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming and California. First Western and its subsidiaries provide a fully

integrated suite of wealth management services on a private trust bank platform, which includes a comprehensive selection of deposit, loan, trust, wealth planning and investment management products and services. First Western's common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol "MYFW." For more information, please visit www.myfw.com.

Non-GAAP Financial Measures

Some of the financial measures included in this press release are not measures of financial performance recognized in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States ("GAAP"). These non-GAAP financial measures include "Tangible Common Equity," "Tangible Common Book Value per Share," "Return on Tangible Common Equity," "Efficiency Ratio," and "Gross Revenue." The Company believes these non-GAAP financial measures provide both management and investors a more complete understanding of the Company's financial position and performance. These non-GAAP financial measures are supplemental and are not a substitute for any analysis based on GAAP financial measures. Not all companies use the same calculation of these measures; therefore, this presentation may not be comparable to other similarly titled measures as presented by other companies. Reconciliation of non-GAAP financial measures are provided at the end of this press release.

Forward-Looking Statements

Statements in this news release regarding our expectations and beliefs about our future financial performance and financial condition, as well as trends in our business and markets are "forward-looking statements" as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements often include words such as "believe," "expect," "anticipate," "intend," "plan," "estimate," "project," "outlook," or words of similar meaning, or future or conditional verbs such as "will," "would," "should," "could," or "may." The forward looking statements in this news release are based on current information and on assumptions that we make about future events and circumstances that are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties that are often difficult to predict and beyond our control. As a result of those risks and uncertainties, our actual financial results in the future could differ, possibly materially, from those expressed in or implied by the forward looking statements contained in this news release and could cause us to make changes to our future plans. Those risks and uncertainties include, without limitation, the risk of geographic concentration in Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming and California; the risk of changes in the economy affecting real estate values and liquidity; the risk in our ability to continue to originate residential real estate loans and sell such loans; risks specific to commercial loans and borrowers; the risk of claims and litigation pertaining to our fiduciary responsibilities; the risk of competition for investment managers and professionals; the risk of fluctuation in the value of our investment securities; the risk of changes in interest rates; and the risk of the adequacy of our allowance for credit losses and the risk in our ability to maintain a strong core deposit base or other low-cost funding sources. Additional information regarding these and other risks and uncertainties to which our business and future financial performance are subject is contained in our Form 10-K with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") on March 21, 2019 Annual Report on Form 10-K ("Form 10-K"), and other documents we file with the SEC from time to time. We urge readers of this news release to review the "Risk Factors" section our Form 10-K and any updates to those risk factors set forth in our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Quarterly Reports on Form 8-K, and our other filings with the SEC. Also, our actual financial results in the future may differ from those currently expected due to additional risks and uncertainties of which we are not currently aware or which we do not currently view as, but in the future may become, material to our business or operating results. Due to these and other possible uncertainties and risks, readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on the forward-looking statements contained in this news release, which speak only as of today's date, or to make predictions based solely on historical financial performance. Any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date on which it is made, and we do not

undertake any obligation to update or review any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise, except as required by law.

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	I	March 31,		ember 31,		March 31,
(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)		2019		2018		2018
Interest and dividend income:						
Loans, including fees	\$	10,218	\$	9,866	\$	8,602
Investment securities		310		273		277
Federal funds sold and other		522		206		127
Total interest and dividend income		11,050		10,345		9,006
Interest expense:						
Deposits		2,909		2,179		1,160
Other borrowed funds		170		267		486
Total interest expense		3,079		2,446	_	1,646
Net interest income	_	7,971		7,899		7,360
Less: Provision for (recovery of) credit losses		194		349		(187)
Net interest income, after provision for (recovery of) credit losses	_	7,777		7,550		7,547
		,				
Non-interest income:						
Trust and investment management fees		4,670		4,752		4,954
Net gain on mortgage loans sold		1,456		791		1,251
Bank fees		289		333		610
Risk management and insurance fees		468		380		383
Income on company-owned life insurance		93		95		94
Total non-interest income		6,976		6,351		7,292
Total income before non-interest expense		14,753		13,901		14,839
Non-interest expense:						
Salaries and employee benefits		7,618		6,710		8,180
Occupancy and equipment		1,407		1,414		1,485
Professional services		777		814		824
Technology and information systems		1,069		954		1,063
Data processing		687		659		640
Marketing		278		378		285
Amortization of other intangible assets		173		163		230
Other		593		557		579
Total non-interest expense		12,602		11,649		13,286
Income before income taxes		2,151		2,252		1,553
Income tax expense		524		528		367
Net income		1,627		1,724		1,186
Preferred stock dividends		_				(561)
Net income available to common shareholders	\$	1,627	\$	1,724	\$	625
Earnings per common share:		·				
Basic and diluted	\$	0.21	\$	0.22	\$	0.11

	_	March 31, 2019		December 31, 2018		March 31, 2018
(Dollars in thousands)						
ASSETS						
Cash and cash equivalents:						
Cash and due from banks	\$	2,164	\$	1,574	\$	1,287
Interest-bearing deposits in other financial institutions		67,602		71,783		35,789
Total cash and cash equivalents		69,766		73,357		37,076
Available-for-sale securities		53,610		43,695		48,842
Correspondent bank stock, at cost		993		2,488		2,326
Mortgage loans held for sale		19,778		14,832		22,146
Loans, net of allowance of \$7,645, \$7,451, and \$7,100		923,545		886,515		810,192
Promissory notes from related parties						5,795
Premises and equipment, net		5,815		6,100		6,477
Accrued interest receivable		3,053		2,844		2,378
Accounts receivable		4,561		4,492		5,504
Other receivables		881		1,391		1,009
Other real estate owned, net		658		658		658
Goodwill		24,811		24,811		24,811
Other intangible assets, net		229		402		1,003
Deferred tax assets, net		4,549		4,306		5,810
Company-owned life insurance		14,803		14,709		14,410
Other assets		17,636		3,724		3,184
Total assets	\$	1,144,688	\$	1,084,324	\$	991,621
LIABILITIES						
Deposits:						
Noninterest-bearing	\$	226,484	\$	202,856	\$	223,582
Interest-bearing	Ψ	751,617	Ψ	734,902	Ψ	594,645
Total deposits		978,101		937,758		818,227
Borrowings:		>,0,101		,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,		010,227
Federal Home Loan Bank Topeka borrowings		20,361		15,000		47,928
Subordinated Notes		6,560		6,560		13,435
Accrued interest payable		329		231		216
Other liabilities		19,669		7,900		7,660
Total liabilities		1,025,020		967,449		887,466
		1,020,020		,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,		007,100
SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY						
Total shareholders' equity		119,668		116,875		104,155
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	\$	1,144,688	\$	1,084,324	\$	991,621
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	As of					
	1	March 31,	December 31,		1	March 31,
(Dollars in thousands)		2019	2018			2018
Loan Portfolio						
Cash, Securities and Other	\$	130,641	\$	114,165	\$	123,659
Construction and Development		37,128		31,897		29,150
1 - 4 Family Residential		360,607		350,852		298,007
Non-Owner Occupied CRE		172,014		173,741		167,617
Owner Occupied CRE		108,873		108,480		92,508
Commercial and Industrial		120,602		113,660		105,265
Total loans held for investment	\$	929,865	\$	892,795	\$	816,206
Deferred costs, net		1,325		1,171		1,086
Gross loans	\$	931,190	\$	893,966	\$	817,292
Total loans held for sale	\$	19,778	\$	14,832	\$	22,146
Deposit Portfolio						
Money market deposit accounts	\$	513,328	\$	489,506	\$	328,427
Time deposits		176,312		178,743		185,459
Negotiable order of withdrawal accounts		59,464		64,853		78,970
Savings accounts		2,513		1,800		1,789
Total interest-bearing deposits	\$	751,617	\$	734,902	\$	594,645
Noninterest-bearing accounts	\$	226,484	\$	202,856	\$	223,582
Total deposits	\$	978,101	\$	937,758	\$	818,227

		For	hree Months E				
	_	March 31,				March 31,	
(Dollars in thousands)		2019	2018			2018	
Average Balance Sheets							
Average Assets							
Interest-earnings assets:							
Interest-bearing deposits in other financial institutions	\$	85,826	\$	36,563	\$	36,375	
Available-for-sale securities		50,474		46,219		51,732	
Loans		915,921		878,145		812,306	
Promissory notes from related parties ⁽¹⁾						5,756	
Interest earning-assets		1,052,221		960,927		906,169	
Mortgage loans held-for-sale		13,277		15,148		18,416	
Total interest earning-assets, plus loans held-for-sale		1,065,498		976,075		924,585	
Allowance for loan losses		(7,567)		(7,240)		(7,170)	
Noninterest-earnings assets		77,780		68,962		72,070	
Total assets	\$	1,135,711	\$	1,037,797	\$	989,485	
Average Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity							
Interest-bearing liabilities:							
Interest-bearing deposits	\$	760,507	\$	674,691	\$	595,148	
Federal Home Loan Bank Topeka borrowings		10,401		26,959		55,517	
Subordinated notes		6,560		6,560		13,436	
Total interest-bearing liabilities	\$	777,468	\$	708,210	\$	664,101	
Noninterest-bearing liabilities:		,		,		,	
Noninterest-bearing deposits		220,408		205,059		214,980	
Other liabilities		19,413		9,214		7,049	
Total noninterest-bearing liabilities	\$	239,821	\$	214,273	\$	222,029	
Shareholders' equity	\$	118,422	\$	115,314	\$	103,355	
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	\$			1,037,797	\$	989,485	
	Ψ	1,100,711	φ	1,007,797	Ψ	707,105	
Yields (annualized)							
Interest-bearing deposits in other financial institutions		2.43 %	/ D	2.25 %		1.40 %	
Available-for-sale securities		2.46 %		2.25 %		2.14 %	
Loans		4.46 %		4.49 %		4.20 %	
Promissory notes from related parties		— %		— %		4.52 %	
Interest earning-assets		4.20 %		4.31 %		3.98 %	
Mortgage loans held-for-sale		3.80 %		4.33 %		4.34 %	
Total interest earning-assets, plus loans held-for-sale		4.20 %		4.31 %		3.98 %	
Interest-bearing deposits		1.53 %		1.29 %		0.78 %	
Federal Home Loan Bank Topeka borrowings		1.92 %		2.20 %		1.65 %	
Subordinated notes		7.32 %		7.26 %		7.65 %	
Total interest-bearing liabilities		1.58 %		1.38 %		0.99 %	
Net interest margin		3.03 %		3.29 %		3.25 %	
Interest rate spread		2.62 %		2.93 %		2.99 %	
morest rate spread		2.02 %	U	2.75 %	,	2.77 %	

(1) Promissory notes from related parties were reclassified to loans in 2018 due to change in composition of related parties.

	As of and for the Three Months Ended							
		March 31,	I	December 31,		March 31,		
(Dollars in thousands, except per share data)		2019		2018		2018		
Asset Quality								
Nonperforming loans	\$	18,713	\$	19,052	\$	3,394		
Nonperforming assets		19,371		19,710		4,052		
Net charge-offs				16		_		
Nonperforming loans to total loans		2.01 %)	2.13 %	,)	0.42 %		
Nonperforming assets to total assets		1.69 %		1.82 %		0.41 %		
Allowance for loan losses to nonperforming loans		40.85 %)	39.11 %	,)	209.19 %		
Allowance for loan losses to total loans		0.82 %)	0.83 %	,)	0.87 %		
Net charge-offs to average loans		— %)	— %	,)	— %		
Assets under management	\$	5,781,297	\$	5,235,177	\$	5,358,316		
Market Data								
Book value per share at period end	\$	15.02	\$	14.67	\$	13.42		
Tangible book value per common share ⁽¹⁾	\$	11.88	\$	11.50	\$	9.05		
Weighted average outstanding shares, basic		7,873,718		7,873,718		5,870,813		
Weighted average outstanding shares, diluted		7,889,644		7,887,512		5,938,426		
Shares outstanding at period end		7,968,420		7,968,420		5,900,698		
Consolidated Capital								
Common Equity Tier 1(CET1) to risk-weighted assets		11.13 %)	11.35 %	,)	7.04 %		
Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets		11.13 %)	11.35 %	,)	9.44 %		
Total capital to risk-weighted assets		12.78 %)	13.06 %	,)	12.31 %		
Tier 1 capital to average assets		8.67 %)	9.28 %	,)	7.72 %		
Bank Capital								
Common Equity Tier 1(CET1) to risk-weighted assets		10.36 %)	10.55 %	,)	10.36 %		
Tier 1 capital to risk-weighted assets		10.36 %)	10.55 %)	10.36 %		
Total capital to risk-weighted assets		11.26 %)	11.47 %	,)	11.29 %		
Tier 1 capital to average assets		8.07 %)	8.63 %)	8.43 %		

(1) Represents a Non-GAAP financial measure. See "Reconciliation of Non-GAAP Measures" for a reconciliation of our Non-GAAP measures to the most directly comparable GAAP financial measure.

Reconciliations of Non-GAAP Financial Measures

	As of and for the Three Months Ended						
	March 31,		December 31,			<u>March 31,</u>	
(Dollars in thousands, except share and per share data)		2019		2018		2018	
Tangible common Total shareholders' equity	\$	119,668	\$	116,875	\$	104,155	
Less:	φ	119,008	Ф	110,875	φ	104,155	
Preferred stock (liquidation preference)						24,968	
Goodwill		24,811		24,811		24,908	
Other intangibles, net		24,811		402		1,003	
Tangible common equity	\$	94,628	\$	91,662	\$	53,373	
Tangible common equity	¢	94,028	φ	91,002	¢	33,373	
Common shares outstanding, end of period	,	7,968,420	,	7,968,420		5,900,698	
Tangible common book value per share	\$	11.88	\$	11.50	\$	9.05	
rungible common book value per share	Ψ	11.00	Ψ	11.00	Ψ	2105	
Net income, as reported	\$	1,627	\$	1,724	\$	1,186	
Less: Preferred stock dividends						561	
Income available to common shareholders	\$	1,627	\$	1,724	\$	625	
Return on tangible common equity	_	6.88 %		7.52 %	,	4.68 %	
Efficiency							
Non-interest expense	\$	12,602	\$	11,649	\$	13,286	
Less: Amortization		173		163		230	
Adjusted non-interest expense	\$	12,429	\$	11,486	\$	13,056	
	_				_		
Net interest income	\$	7,971	\$	7,899	\$	7,360	
Non-interest income		6,976		6,351		7,292	
Total income	\$	14,947	\$	14,250	\$	14,652	
Efficiency ratio		83.15 %		80.60 %	,	89.11 %	
Total income before non-interest expense	\$	14,753	\$	13,901	\$	14,839	
Plus: Provision for (recovery of) credit losses		194		349		(187)	
Gross revenue	\$	14,947	\$	14,250	\$	14,652	