



A. Scott Anderson's remarkable career growing Utah's economy and guiding its nonprofit community

By Matt Sandgren | Thursday, February 29, 2024

Twenty-five years is a long time. A quarter century. A generation. More than six presidential terms.

For over 25 years, Scott Anderson has been one of Utah's most influential and respected leaders. Most Utahns know him as the president and CEO of Zions Bank, which he's guided steadfastly since 1998. During that time, Zions has grown into Utah's leading full-service commercial bank and Scott has become a household name in our state.

Last week, Scott announced he'll be stepping down as Zions Bank president and CEO on April 1. He'll continue to be involved with bank leadership as a non-executive chair.

Looking back on Scott's years of service, we see a remarkable tenure whose influence has extended far beyond Zions Bank's doors.

During his time as president and CEO, Scott steered Zions through the aftermath of 9/11, the 2008 financial crisis and the uncertainty that followed last year's failure of Silicon Valley Bank. Scott was a steadying influence who helped keep the bank on firm financial footing and secure its place as Utah's leading commercial lender. He was also a nationally recognized leader on banking issues and served as chairman of the American Bankers Association.

Equally significant has been Scott's community leadership. Heralded as a "Giant in Our City" by the Salt Lake Chamber, he's served on so many nonprofit and community boards that listing all of them would take up all the space left in this op-ed. A few highlights include the Americans for the Arts Business Committee for the Arts, Days of '47 Rodeo, World Trade Center Utah, Utah Sports Commission, Economic Development Corporation of Utah, and one near and dear to my heart — the Orrin G. Hatch Foundation. His support for the nonprofit and charitable community is unparalleled.

Scott has also been a tremendous influence for good in Utah's political scene. Although he's never held elected office, he's been involved in so many issues and mentored so many public leaders that he might as well have had a small office of his own in the state Capitol. Not for nothing has he been called Utah's "[unelected governor](#)." Many an aspiring official considering a run for office have sought his counsel and used him as a sounding board for policy ideas. When

you have someone so knowledgeable, so experienced and so kind, and a person whose No. 1 goal is to help our state succeed, you would be crazy not to seek out his advice.

That is something that I've been fortunate to experience myself many times through the years. First as a staffer on Capitol Hill and now as the executive director of the Hatch Foundation, I've been lucky to see Scott work his magic in various settings. He's a master at building consensus and identifying areas of common ground. He's generous, polite and pursues his objectives without ego. His kindness and influence transcend party politics.

On a personal note, Scott's been a tremendous mentor and friend to me as we've served together in the Hatch Foundation. Scott quickly understood that to carry on Sen. Hatch's legacy, the foundation would need to play at the national level while also maintaining our Utah roots. With his vision, we've built [relationships](#) with and promoted [policy recommendations](#) for lawmakers in Washington and engaged with the Edward M. Kennedy Institute and Bipartisan Policy Institute to create [The Senate Project](#) debate series. To date, this initiative has produced four debates with senators from both sides of the aisle and has been broadcast on Fox News, CBS News and C-SPAN. And it wouldn't have happened without Scott's foresight and commitment to cultivating a culture of bipartisanship and civility.

I truly do not know where Scott finds the time to do everything he does. How he keeps up such a dizzying schedule of community service while also running Zions Bank is nothing short of superhuman. But one thing I do know is that Zions' loss is sure to be Utah's gain, as Scott will now have even more time and energy to devote to making our state the best it can be.

Thank you, Scott, for your service to Zions Bank and Utah. We wish you and Jesselie well in your retirement. But don't put your feet up quite yet – we're just getting started.

Matt Sandgren is the executive director and a board member of the [Orrin G. Hatch Foundation](#). A 15-year veteran of Capitol Hill, he served as a senior counsel on the Senate Judiciary Committee and as Sen. Orrin Hatch's chief of staff.