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FINANCIAL SERVICES CAREER INSIDER

THE MONTHLY CAREER INTELLIGENCE REPORT

SCAN FOR THE SITE

Know the Industry. Find the Opportunity. Build Your Career.

OCTOBER 2026 · MONTHLY · FREE FOR STUDENTS

SEND TO A FRIEND

FORMERLY THE FINANCIAL SERVICES BRIEF

Financial services is not standing still. A fintech is buying its own bank. A major bank is opening business-banking teams in four new markets. The largest real estate services firm just had its best office-leasing quarter. Wealth managers are merging at a record pace.

For students, the question is not only *"Who's hiring?"* It is **"Where is the industry investing?"** That is where the work, and the entry-level seats, tend to follow. Each month this report gives you one industry development, five companies to watch, one career to explore, one recruiting insight, one interview question and one short challenge, each tied to a free Classroom 2 Career resource.

Explore the six financial services industry segments →

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Wealth management's record year of deals

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Chime · U.S. Bank · CBRE · Citizens · JPMorgan

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"Why our firm?"

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Three companies, one lesson, 25 minutes

THE INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

1 WEALTH MANAGEMENT IS CONSOLIDATING AT A RECORD PACE

Acquisitions of wealth-management firms reached **262 in the first half of 2026**, up from 220 a year earlier. That puts the year on pace for about 500 deals, which would beat 2025's record. Private-equity-backed buyers did roughly three-quarters of the second-quarter transactions, and banks are adding advisor teams the same way (see Citizens in Segment 04).

262	~500	3 of 4
wealth-firm acquisitions, first half of 2026	full-year pace, which would top 2025's record	second-quarter deals done by private-equity-backed buyers

What it could mean for students. Consolidation sounds like fewer jobs. For entry-level candidates it often works the other way. A buyer that absorbs a dozen advisor teams needs client associates, operations and onboarding staff, compliance analysts, financial planners and technology people to make the teams fit, and private-equity-backed platforms need analysts who can build the reporting their investors expect. The firms doing the buying are the ones to research first.

On the calendar: the big banks report third-quarter results in mid-October. Listen for what they say about deal pipelines, wealth-management flows and hiring.

Explore the Wealth Management & Private Banking career series → 5 lessons · 24 min

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FIVE SEGMENTS. FIVE COMPANIES TO WATCH.

2 ONE DEVELOPMENT IN EACH CLASSROOM 2 CAREER SEGMENT

01 CONSUMER FINANCE & FINTECH

COMPANY TO WATCH: **CHIME**

Chime is buying its own bank. Chime agreed to acquire Stride Bank, its banking partner for about seven years, for **$590 million in cash**. Stride, a 1913-founded Oklahoma bank with about $5.4 billion in assets, would become Chime Bank, N.A. Chime expects roughly $100 million in net synergies from eliminating sponsor-bank fees, expanding lending and lowering its cost of funds. It serves 10.4 million active members and expects to close in the first half of 2027, pending approvals. Announced Sept 8

> WHY IT MATTERS A fintech owning a national bank charter is a big step toward vertical integration. Bringing a bank in-house creates work in credit, risk, compliance, operations, product, finance and data.

> CAREER TAKEAWAY After a big acquisition, do not look only at the company being bought. Look at the functions the combined company must build, integrate and run; those are the areas worth investigating for entry-level roles.

Explore this career series → Explore 30 companies in this segment · Consumer Finance Fintechs

02 COMMERCIAL BANKING, FINANCE & LEASING

COMPANY TO WATCH: U.S. BANK

New markets, new bankers. U.S. Bank is putting business-banking teams into **Florida and Georgia** (about 10 bankers each) and adding roughly 10 more each in **Dallas and Phoenix**. The target client is a business with $2.5 million to $50 million in annual revenue. The bank has added about 50 client-facing roles in 2026, has roughly 1,300 business bankers, and says more "fast follows" are coming in markets where it already has wealth and middle-market teams. Reported Aug 31

> WHY IT MATTERS Geographic expansion increases the need for people who can build relationships, analyze businesses, underwrite credit and support commercial clients, in the new markets and at headquarters.

> CAREER TAKEAWAY When a bank enters a new market, put both the bank *and* the market on your target list. Expansion is a signal to investigate before you search job boards.

Explore this career series → Explore 30 companies in this segment · National & Regional Banks

03 COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

COMPANY TO WATCH: CBRE

The biggest name in commercial real estate is growing. CBRE, the world's largest commercial real estate services firm (it helps companies lease, buy, sell and manage buildings), reported second-quarter revenue of **$11.2 billion, up about 15%**, and raised its outlook for the year. U.S. leasing revenue rose 24%, U.S. office leasing had its **best second quarter ever**, and data-center revenue grew nearly 30%. Reported July 29

> WHY IT MATTERS Real estate is more than buying buildings. Services firms earn fees for leasing space, selling properties, managing buildings and appraising them, and they hire entry-level analysts in every one of those areas.

> CAREER TAKEAWAY Follow the property types that are growing. Right now that includes data centers and a recovering office market, both reasons to investigate analyst, brokerage-support and property-management roles.

Explore this career series → Explore 30 companies in this segment · Brokerage & Capital Markets

04 WEALTH MANAGEMENT & PRIVATE BANKING

COMPANY TO WATCH: CITIZENS

Building in Florida, one team at a time. Citizens Private Wealth added **MacLellan Bickle Wealth Partners**, a Tampa team overseeing more than $1 billion in client assets, its 12th team addition since 2024. Citizens now has Florida offices in Boca Raton, Naples, Palm Beach, West Palm Beach and Tampa, with a focus on business owners.
Announced Aug 26

> WHY IT MATTERS Wealth management increasingly overlaps with private and commercial banking. Serving affluent business owners can involve investments, lending, planning and succession advice, all under one roof.

> CAREER TAKEAWAY Do not search only for "financial advisor." Look at analyst, client associate, investment, portfolio, planning, relationship and private-banking roles, especially at firms adding teams.

Explore this career series → Explore 30 companies in this segment · Private Banks

05 INVESTMENT BANKING & PRIVATE EQUITY

COMPANY TO WATCH: JPMORGAN

JPMorgan is leaning in. After investment-banking fees rose about **30% year over year** in the second quarter, co-President Doug Petno said he expects third-quarter investment-banking fees and markets revenue to rise by the "mid-to-high teens," citing a strong pipeline and broad strength, particularly in M&A. Not every bank sees the same quarter: Bank of America expects its third-quarter fees to fall at least 10% after a record second quarter, though it says its pipeline remains strong. Sept 15–18

WHY IT MATTERS Deal activity drives demand well beyond managing directors: analysts, associates, capital markets and M&A teams, plus the law, accounting and consulting firms around every deal.

CAREER TAKEAWAY Watch deal activity, not just job postings. When volume rises, opportunities spread across banking, private equity, private credit and professional services.

Explore this career series → Explore 30 companies in this segment · Global Investment Banks

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3 CAREER SPOTLIGHT
COMMERCIAL CREDIT ANALYST

Every business banker U.S. Bank adds in Florida, Georgia, Dallas or Phoenix brings in loan requests that someone has to analyze. That someone is usually a credit analyst, one of the most common first jobs in commercial banking and a role that exists at every bank, finance company and lessor on the Top 30 lists.

WHAT THE PERSON DOES

Reads a borrower's financial statements, spreads them into the bank's format, analyzes cash flow and collateral, writes the credit memo that recommends approving or declining a loan, and monitors existing loans for warning signs. Works alongside relationship managers and senior credit officers.

USEFUL SKILLS

Comfort with the three financial statements and Excel; clear, concise writing (the memo is the product); curiosity about how a business makes money; and the **5 C's of credit**: character, capacity, capital, collateral, conditions.

TYPICAL QUALIFICATIONS

A bachelor's degree in finance, accounting, economics or business. Many banks run formal credit-training programs for new graduates; an accounting course or banking internship helps. No license is required.

POSSIBLE PROGRESSION

Analyst → senior analyst or portfolio manager → relationship manager (sales side) or underwriter and credit officer (approval side). The same skills transfer to equipment leasing, private credit and commercial real estate lending.

CREDIT ANALYST → PORTFOLIO MANAGER → RELATIONSHIP MANAGER OR CREDIT OFFICER

Explore this career and related roles → Financial Services Careers Map · PDF

Lessons to watch: "Commercial Banking" (6:25) and "Entry-Level Career Guide" (5:36).

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THE RECRUITER'S EDGE

ONE INSIGHT FROM EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

FOLLOW THE MONEY

Recruiters are hired to fill seats where money just moved. When a company enters a new market, buys another company, raises a fund, opens an office or lifts out a team, resources follow, and often people. **Do not start with job postings. Start with where financial companies are putting capital.**

Every development in this issue is one of those signals. Put the company on your target list, and put the **market** on it too: a new U.S. Bank team in Tampa needs people in Tampa. Then find the people in the functions that will do the work and reach them before the postings appear.

ACQUISITIONS · NEW MARKETS · NEW FUNDS · NEW OFFICES · TEAM LIFT-OUTS

FROM THE FOUNDER'S DECADES OF FINANCIAL-SERVICES EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Watch the related Job Strategy lesson →

Worksheet 01: Career Direction & Target List · PDF

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INTERVIEW READY

TURN THE NEWS INTO YOUR ANSWER

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION

"WHY OUR FIRM?"

Almost every interview includes some version of this. Most students answer from the company's website. Stand out by answering with what the company is **doing**, in three moves:

1
READ
Find one move the firm made in the last 90 days: a deal, a new market, a new team.

2
CONNECT
Link it to the role: what will that growth need, and how could you help?

3
ASK
End with a question about it. A good question shows interest better than any claim.

SAMPLE RESPONSE

"I saw U.S. Bank is building business-banking teams in Florida. I'm interested in credit, and a new market means a lot of new client relationships to underwrite. How is the team thinking about growth here over the next year?"

The same structure works for any company in this issue. Keep the answer under 60 seconds and let the question do the work.

Open the Interview Checklist →

Watch the Job Strategy lesson · 7:17

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YOUR MONTHLY CAREER CHALLENGE

THREE COMPANIES, ONE LESSON

ABOUT 25 MINUTES

1. Choose **one of the five segments** above, the one whose company story interested you most.
2. Open that segment's **Top 30 company lists** and pick three companies you would consider working for. Note where each has offices.
3. On each company's careers page, find **one entry-level position** and write down its title.
4. Watch **one lesson** from that segment's video series.
5. Write one paragraph on **which role interests you most and why**. Keep it; you will use it next month.

Complete this month's career challenge →

Finish before the November issue. It brings five new company developments and a challenge that builds on the three companies you chose. Come back for it.

YOUR CAREER JOURNEY DOESN'T STOP HERE.

MAKE CLASSROOM 2 CAREER YOUR CAREER RESOURCE

Explore **six financial services industry segments**, 51 video lessons, 45 Top 30 company lists, career guides and practical worksheets. **All resources are free.**

Explore Classroom 2 Career

Not sure what to do this year? The **Year-by-Year Career Plan** is one page on what to do freshman through senior year. Free PDF.

Come back next month for more company developments, career insights and practical job-search strategies.

Know a student who should read this? Forward this issue to a friend, classmate or roommate.

Send to a Friend

Classroom 2 Career

FIND YOUR PATH. BUILD YOUR FUTURE.

Industry conditions and hiring practices change; verify current information directly with employers. Developments are reported as of the dates shown. Company names appear for identification only.

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