Bittersweet is how Matt Williams describes the end of a year chairing one of the largest banking associations in the world.

Williams chaired the American Bankers Association from October 2012 to 2013 and passed the gavel to a new chairman during the ABA convention in New Orleans, LA, Oct. 20-22.

The ABA represents 95% of the U.S. banking industry's $14 trillion in assets.

"I enjoyed the ride but it's time to move onto other endeavors," Williams said.

Williams said he thinks he helped set the stage and foundation for future development of the ABA and worked hard to build relationships within the organization.

Highlights of the year included a trip to China with wife, Susan Williams, and being invited to the White House.

The couple traveled to Shanghai for the International Monetary Conference in early June.

As president and CEO of a small community bank in the middle of Nebraska, operating with $120 million in assets, Williams said the Gothenburg State Bank was far from the norm with 50 of the world's largest banks represented.

Williams was first elected vice chairman and then chairman elect. His last year was spent as chairman.

During the three-year period, Williams attended and spoke at 44 conventions in states scattered across the country.

Since the financial meltdown in 2008, Williams said banks are stronger and have more capital than before despite ongoing difficulties in certain geographic areas.

Consolidation of some banks will continue but he said the business model for community banks still works.

He added that the experience lit his fire to be more involved politically.

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