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# \$9.1m

Raised for local United Way organizations and other charities during the 2016 employee giving campaign.

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## A League of Their Own

BMO partners with the Chicago Urban League to help empower Chicago communities.

**“IT’S A PASSION OF MINE** to empower people with knowledge, and show them that home-ownership is attainable,” says Margaret Wooten, Senior Director of the Chicago Urban League’s Housing and Financial Empowerment Center. The HUD-certified center serves over 1,000 people each year, providing low-to-moderate income residents with professional housing counseling assistance, including first-time homebuyer workshops and financial literacy classes. These programs help clients understand the path to sustainable home-ownership, which is a key factor in creating strong, healthy communities.

For 100 years, the League has worked for economic, educational and social progress for African Americans by promoting strong, sustainable communities through advocacy, collaboration and innovation. One of their partners in this work is BMO, a

top corporate funder whose employees also serve as League board members, educators and volunteers. “I don’t believe anyone has a partnership as great as the one we have with BMO,” says Margaret. “BMO just gets it. This is a bank that’s really human.”

BMO’s Loretta Minor has been teaching League workshops since 2007. She is a member of the bank’s CRA Relationship Managers Unit, which identifies partners in the community that share BMO’s goals and builds relationships with them. “To know you played a very small part in helping someone achieve their goals and dreams – it’s amazing. And everyone on our team has a passion for helping,” says Loretta. That passion comes through in her work. “She is so good at what she does,” says Margaret. “Many of our clients do not trust banks. We try to show them that there are real people working there. And with Loretta, they get that. Her presentations say: ‘It’s BMO, but I’m Loretta.’”

BMO is committed to creating that kind of trust in every community they operate in. “It’s not just compliance – it’s part of a greater vision,” says BMO executive and League board member Alex Dousmanis-Curtis, “BMO invests in the communities where we live and work, and we mean it when we say, ‘We’re here to help.’ We leverage our skills to create positive change, because that’s what really matters.” 🍌