

BMO Recognizes Women's Contributions to Small Business and Community in Calgary
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CALGARY, June 28, 2017 /CNW/ - Four women were honoured through the annual BMO Celebrating Women event in Calgary in two categories: Community and Charitable Giving and Expansion and Growth in Small Business. BMO Celebrating Women recognizes female leaders in local communities across the country as part of the bank's commitment to drive the advancement of women.

At the event, the following honourees were recognized:

- Community and Charitable Giving: **Sara L. Austin**. Ms. Austin is the Founder and CEO of Children First Canada, a non-profit organization that protects and empowers the country's vulnerable children. She uses her experience in the sector to improve children's lives around the globe. In 2014, she delivered a speech at the United Nations headquarters in New York to mark the adoption of a law she campaigned for that allows children whose rights have been violated to bring their grievances directly to the UN.
- Expansion and Growth in Small Business: **Lara Murphy and Karen Ryan**. Ms. Murphy and Ms. Ryan are co-owners of Ryan Murphy Construction, a leading construction, renovation and project management company in Calgary. They met in 2007, when they were the only two females on a construction site in Banff, and opened the company together one year later. This year, Ryan Murphy Construction was named one of Alberta's 50 fastest growing companies by Alberta Venture.
- Expansion and Growth in Small Business: **Lana Stenhouse**. Ms. Hundt is the owner of Electrogas Monitors Ltd., a company that specializes in gas detection and fire safety equipment for Western Canada's oil and gas industry. She and her husband began the company in 1997 and grew it to be a major supplier. After his passing in 2016, she made the company more collaborative and team-oriented. The company just reached its highest revenue month in two years.

"These women have made developments in the advancement of women through their leadership and hard work, and we're pleased to highlight, and stand behind, their remarkable achievements," said Susan Brown, Senior Vice President, Alberta and Northwest Territories Division, BMO Bank of Montreal.

The BMO Celebrating Women program follows the bank's second Catalyst Award win for its industry-leading work to accelerate diversity and inclusion in its workplace and dedication to gender equality.

In addition, BMO has partnerships with organizations such as GroYourBiz, WBE Canada, Women Presidents' Organization, SheEO and Catalyst. It has also developed products that address the needs of its female clients, including the recent Women in Leadership Mutual Fund – the first impact investing mutual fund offered by a Canadian bank focused on gender diversity – and spearheaded studies around women entrepreneurs, such as *A Force to Reckon With: Women, Entrepreneurs & Risk* – an eye-opening report in partnership with Carleton University that debunked myths around the notion of women being risk averse.

For more information about BMO Celebrating Women, please visit: bmoforwomen.com and join the social conversation using #BMOforWomen.

About BMO Financial Group

Established in 1817, and currently marking its 200th year of operations, BMO Financial Group is a highly diversified financial services provider based in North America. With total assets of \$719 billion as of April 30, 2017, and more than 45,000 employees, BMO provides a broad range of personal and commercial banking, wealth management and investment banking products and services to more than 12 million customers and conducts business through three operating groups: Personal and Commercial Banking, Wealth Management and BMO Capital Markets.

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