

## **BMO Financial Group Recognized in Bloomberg Financial Services Gender-Equality Index**

**Wednesday, January 25, 2017 02:00:00 PM (GMT)**

**TORONTO, ONTARIO--(Marketwired - Jan. 25, 2017)** - BMO Financial Group today announced that it is one of 52 firms recognized in the 2017 Bloomberg Financial Services Gender-Equality Index. The index provides investors and organizations with standardized aggregate data across company gender statistics, employee policies, gender-conscious product offerings and external community support and engagement.

Those included in this year's index scored at or above 60 points, a global threshold established by Bloomberg to reflect disclosure and the achievement or adoption of best-in-class statistics and policies.

"BMO is dedicated to creating a workplace that is equitable and inclusive. We made a commitment to achieving 40 per cent representation of women in the top one per cent of our senior leadership roles in the organization, a goal we realized in 2016," said Sonya Kunkel, Chief Inclusion Officer and Vice President People Strategies and Insight.

"Through continued focus on practices and programs that identify and break down barriers to inclusion and fairness, we hope to sustain our progress and inspire confidence that BMO is an organization where everyone can succeed, and opportunities are available to all," she said.

### ***Highlights of some of the key initiatives include:***

- **Driving social change by investing in gender-diverse companies** -- BMO was the first Canadian bank to launch an impact-investing mutual fund focused on gender diversity - the ***BMO Women in Leadership Fund***, which launched in April 2016, provides investors with exposure to a portfolio of North American companies with gender-diverse leadership.
- **A diverse Board helps us make better decisions** -- BMO's Board of Directors believes that a board made up of highly qualified directors helps us make better decisions. Thus BMO's Board Diversity Policy includes the goal that each gender comprise at least one-third of the independent directors - currently, **36.4 per cent** of BMO's independent board members are women.
- **Investing in Women** -- BMOforWomen is an initiative focused on serving the unique needs of female clients in recognition of the fact that women are an increasingly powerful economic force. BMO is making a conscious effort to invest in women by supporting causes important to them, developing tools and resources to help them succeed, understanding their unique needs and adjusting how they work to help women realize their financial goals.
- **Accelerating the advancement of diverse talent** -- BMO has implemented a formal enterprise sponsorship program where senior leaders in the bank are nominated and paired with diverse talent who have the potential for more senior roles. Sponsors advocate for their protégé's advancement, identify stretch opportunities, facilitate key business introductions, and become actively involved in their protégé's career - transcending the traditional role of a mentor.
- **Fostering an inclusive workplace through education** -- In 2016, BMO launched "Learn from Difference", a multi-year, e-learning initiative to build inclusive leadership capability among BMO's people-manager population. "Learn from Difference", which is available to all employees, is focused on acknowledging and accepting that we all have biases and encouraging employees to speak up and take action to minimize the impact of those biases when they are most likely to occur.

### **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 \$688 billion as of October 31, 2016, 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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**Countries:** CA, US

**Industries:** Financial Services, Financial Services:Commercial and Investment Banking, Financial Services:Insurance, Financial Services:Investment Services and Trading, Financial Services:Personal Finance, Financial Services:Retail Banking

**Primary Identifiers:** BMO-CA, BMO-US

**Related Identifiers:** BMO-CA, BMO-US

**Subjects:** CONTESTS & AWARDS