

**BMO Encouraged to Continue Its Efforts to Further Transgender Awareness Throughout the Bank**  
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**Discussion Forum at BMO draws praise from employees and guest speakers**

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One day after hosting its first Transgender Awareness event at its Church and Alexander branch in downtown Toronto, employees and guest speakers from the LGBT community have praised BMO and its employee resource group, BMO Pride, for its efforts to raise awareness about the needs of Trans-identified customers and employees. BMO Pride plans to institute a regular program of dialogue and information sessions on LGBT topics that impact their colleagues and customers.

BMO hosted the event in honour of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, inviting employees throughout the GTA to participate in an education and awareness session about working with transgender colleagues and serving transgender customers.

"So often when people talk about supporting the LGBT community, the 'T' is an afterthought," said Sonya Kunkel, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, BMO Financial Group. "Our employee group, BMO Pride, recognized this and took it upon themselves to increase BMO's awareness of the experiences and needs of Trans-identified customers and employees. This all comes back to our vision, to be the bank that defines great customer experience."

The session was designed to increase BMO employees' understanding of the societal issues that affect transgendered people as both colleagues and customers, so that they can support and serve them better.

Professionals from the LGBT community shared their personal insights and expertise and engaged the audience in a fulsome discussion about the challenges and the opportunities to create strong and lasting affinities with trans employees and customers. The session concluded with an enthusiastic commitment from BMO Pride to expand the sessions into an ongoing program.

**About BMO Financial Group**

BMO is committed to sustaining an inclusive workforce that represents all the communities we serve, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. The bank is also committed to providing a great customer experience that includes respectful, courteous and professional service that is based on a deep understanding of our customers' needs.

In 2012, BMO sponsorships will include:

-- CLIMAX: The Canadian Live Intimate Art and Music Experience! -- \$10,000 donation to Toronto PFLAG -- The Pride and Remembrance Run -- Starry Night, The 519 Church Street Community Centre's annual charity Pride gala - Buddies and Bad Times Theatre

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