

Supplier Diversity Summit Educates Women and Minority Business Owners on How to Advance Their Businesses

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Fifth Third Bank recently hosted its fourth annual Supplier Diversity Summit. With the theme of “Leveling Up Your Business,” the summit focused on educating women and minorities on how to advance their companies.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20181113005970/en/>



Stephanie Smith, Director of Supplier Diversity and Inclusion; Greg Carmichael, Chairman, President and CEO and Kimberly Blackwell, CEO of PMM, attended the 2018 Fifth Third Bank Supplier Diversity Summit. (Photo: Business Wire)

The Supplier Diversity Summit is hosted each year as a way to help women-, minority- and veteran-owned companies do more business with Fifth Third. It is also a way for those owners to gain perspectives from each other and to network. Over 180 people attended the event, and more than 60 diverse companies from 15 states were represented.

Greg Carmichael, Fifth Third's chairman, president and CEO, said supplier diversity is key to the Bank's bottom line. "Supplier diversity is a strategic imperative for the

health and vitality of our business and communities," he said. "We work hard to build strong relationships with minority-, women- and veteran-owned businesses because we recognize that suppliers are essential partners in providing high-quality products and services to our customers. Since 2015, we have continued to significantly increase our spending with diverse suppliers."

Fifth Third spends hundreds of millions of dollars annually in goods and services, ranging from facility-management services to information technology and office supplies. Awarding more of these contracts to diverse businesses has been a major focus of the Bank's Strategic Sourcing department, led by Chief Sourcing Officer Juan Munoz, Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer Teresa Tanner, Chief Diversity and Corporate Social Responsibility Officer Jule Kucera and Director of Supplier Diversity and Inclusion Stephanie Smith.

Munoz said the Bank's executive team has made building the Supplier Diversity Program a priority. "We continue to take an integrated and thoughtful approach to identifying, supporting and partnering with the many qualified diverse suppliers all over the country. The Supplier Diversity Summit affords us the opportunity to collaborate with these individuals and to make them aware of the opportunities that exist at the Bank."

Kimberly Blackwell, CEO of PMM, a full-service marketing and communications firm, served as the keynote speaker at the summit. She told attendees about the importance of learning through experiences and evaluating partnerships. She explained that as a business owner, it is important to be committed, passionate

and driven. And as the visionary of their business, an owner has the opportunity and responsibility every day to share their brand with the world.

Part of Fifth Third's Community Commitment focuses on increasing diversity and inclusion efforts and the number of companies with which it does business. This year, a highlight of the summit included recognizing some of the graduates of the Ohio Minority Supplier Diversity Council/Ohio State University Fisher School of Business Supplier Diversity Executive Education program. The SDEE program, which was sponsored in part by Fifth Third, exists to create and deliver development opportunities for the enhancement of minority businesses and to help them be better suppliers to corporate partners. The program also helps facilitate the employment and economic development of minority communities.

Jennifer O'Neal Harris, director of channel sales/partnerships at ConnXus, is a summit attendee and SDEE graduate who said her experience was valuable. "Working with the colleagues and participants and learning from them and the professors was beneficial for me," she said. "The information I learned has made a huge impact on my business."

Through the years, Fifth Third has developed many partnerships with organizations that focus on enhancing supplier diversity efforts at businesses including the National Minority Supplier Development Council (nmsdc.org), the U.S. Small Business Administration (sba.gov), the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (va.gov) and the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (wbenc.org). In 2018, the Supplier Diversity Program was recognized by Minority Business News as one of the Best of the Decade; by Diversity Plus Magazine for Stephanie Smith's accomplishments in directing the supplier diversity initiatives; and by WBENC as one of America's Top Corporations.

For more information about Fifth Third's Supplier Diversity Program, visit <https://www.53.com/content/fifth-third/en/personal-banking/about/diversity-at-fifth-third/supplier-diversity.html>.

About Fifth Third

Fifth Third Bancorp is a diversified financial services company headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio and the indirect parent company of Fifth Third Bank, an Ohio-chartered bank. As of Sept.30, 2018, Fifth Third had \$142 billion in assets and operated 1,152 full-service Banking Centers and 2,443 ATMs with Fifth Third branding in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Florida, Tennessee, West Virginia, Georgia and North Carolina. In total, Fifth Third provides its customers with access to approximately 53,000 fee-free ATMs across the United States. Fifth Third operates four main businesses: Commercial Banking, Branch Banking, Consumer Lending and Wealth & Asset Management. Fifth Third is among the largest money managers in the Midwest and, as of Sept. 30, 2018, had \$376 billion in assets under care, of which it managed \$38 billion for individuals, corporations and not-for-profit organizations through its Trust and Registered Investment Advisory businesses. Investor information and press releases can be viewed at www.53.com. Fifth Third's common stock is traded on the Nasdaq® Global Select Market under the symbol "FITB." Fifth Third Bank was established in 1858. Deposit and credit products are offered by Fifth Third Bank. Member FDIC.

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