

BMO and Catalyst Canada Introduce BMO Millennial Leaders Advisory Council

TORONTO, November 18, 2015 - BMO Financial Group and Catalyst Canada have announced the launch of the BMO Millennial Leaders Advisory Council on Inclusion. The group is made up of 30 female student leaders from universities across Canada.

Bill Downe, Chief Executive Officer, BMO Financial Group, and Alex Johnston, Executive Director, Catalyst Canada – the leading non-profit organization advancing women and inclusive workplaces – gathered recently in Toronto with the Council members for the inaugural meeting. BMO and Catalyst will consult with the group on an ongoing basis to gain insights to guide their own programs, and to support the students as they bring the dialogue on leadership to their own communities.

The new Council aims to develop strategies to advance women, build inclusive workplaces and help grow Canada's talent advantage for the future. Despite the advancement and even dominance of women in many university undergraduate and graduate programs, Catalyst research shows that Canada's 'best and brightest' women continue to face gaps in opportunities when compared to their male counterparts.

"We know that advancing Canada's talented women is critical to our economic future and for businesses to remain competitive today and in the years to come," said Mr. Downe. "With Millennials projected to be 50 per cent of the global workforce by 2020, we are very interested in their ideas and recommendations on business leadership, culture and innovation. This group of bright, high-potential women represents the most educated and most talented generation in memory, and we need to listen to them. We're counting on them to create the workplaces of the future – workplaces unimpeded by the barriers that the current generation of leaders is working to remove.

"Our discussion highlighted that Millennials truly desire to have a voice. Early on in their careers they want to have an impact on the work being done and know that their contributions will be recognized and have value – and really, that is a universal desire."

Mr. Downe added that BMO has made steady progress in the past few years in advancing the representation of women in senior leadership ranks. Women currently make up 37.7 per cent of BMO's senior leaders, and the bank is on track to achieve its goal of 40 per cent representation by 2017.

“We have optimism that closing the gender gap is possible,” said Ms. Johnston. “This group of Millennial women will soon enter the workforce. They are motivated to support our mission of advancing women through inclusion, and we’re so grateful to have their counsel and support.”

Students participating on the Council range in age from 20-27. Business schools represented on the Council include: Sprott School of Business at Carleton University; John Molson School of Business at Concordia University; Rowe School of Business at Dalhousie University; Desautels Faculty of Management at McGill University; DeGroot School of Business at McMaster University; Stephen J.R. Smith School of Business at Queen’s University; Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University; Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary’s University; Alberta School of Business at University of Alberta; Saunderson School of Business at University of British Columbia; Haskayne School of Business at University of Calgary; I.H. Asper School of Business at University of Manitoba; Telfer School of Management at University of Ottawa; Joseph L. Rotman School of Management at University of Toronto; Peter B. Gustavson School of Business at University of Victoria; Ivey School of Business at Western University; Lazaridis School of Business and Economics at Wilfrid Laurier University; and Schulich School of Business at York University.

Engineering schools represented on the Council include: McGill University; McMaster University; Queen’s University; Simon Fraser University; University of Alberta; University of British Columbia; University of Calgary; University of Ottawa; University of Toronto; University of Victoria; and York University.

About BMO Financial Group

Established in 1817, BMO Financial Group is a highly diversified financial services provider based in North America. With total assets of approximately \$672 billion as of July 31, 2015, and more than 47,000 employees, BMO provides a broad range of retail 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.

About Catalyst

Founded in 1962, Catalyst is the leading nonprofit organization expanding opportunities for women and business. With operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, India, Australia, and Japan, and more than 800 member organizations, Catalyst is the trusted resource for research, information, and advice about women at work. Catalyst annually honors exemplary organizational initiatives that promote women's advancement with the Catalyst Award.

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