

Huntington Bank Commits \$1 Million to Help Columbus Urban League Energize Inner-City Economic Development

Huntington challenges local leaders to match its contribution

COLUMBUS, Ohio--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Huntington Bank (NASDAQ: HBAN; www.huntington.com) is committing \$1 million over the next three years to help the Columbus Urban League (CUL) energize economic growth and create jobs in Columbus' urban core. The commitment comes after one of the deepest recessions in U.S. history has left one in five city residents in poverty, officials of both organizations announced today at a Columbus press conference.

"The Columbus Urban League has new leadership, a new vision and an opportunity to help the next generation of citizens as we recover from the economic downturn," said Steve Steinour, Huntington's chairman, president and CEO. "Huntington wants to motivate others in the community in the support of the Urban League as it builds upon its current Head Start and workforce development programs. We look forward to the Urban League's ongoing efforts to create additional innovative and collaborative strategies aimed at jumpstarting urban development."

This historic partnership was announced in front of the newly christened Huntington Empowerment Center located at 780 Mt. Vernon Avenue, across the street from CUL's King-Lincoln district headquarters. The center will become a hub of economic stimulus activity, with an array of economic development initiatives, such as job training, a business incubator offering access to micro and revolving loans, and other services vital to small business growth. The space will also be used for social enterprise entities and community outreach initiatives such as Huntington's financial education program for home ownership.

"By targeting some of the barriers impeding urban entrepreneurs, we can bolster the number of successful small business starts and fertilize the growth of existing successful minority-owned ventures," said CUL president and CEO Stephanie Hightower, noting that Columbus currently ranks 13th among 16 comparable cities in new business launches. "Inspired and empowered by Huntington's leadership, we look forward to partnering with other leaders in the City, County and nonprofit community to create jobs and open the door for economic opportunity in the inner city."

These outcomes are aimed at persistent inner city issues: one in five Columbus residents – and more than 30 percent of Franklin County children – live in poverty. Unemployment rates among the 40,000 ex-offenders who annually leave incarceration and return to Franklin County climb to nearly 60 percent. And an estimated 1,600 children – almost 34 percent of all children entering Columbus City Schools – start kindergarten a year behind academically.

"This historical partnership is key to the revitalization of our urban core," said Columbus

Mayor Michael B. Coleman. "I thank the Columbus Urban League and Huntington Bank for having the vision and making the investment in new avenues that lead to the empowerment of our City's families and communities."

"Creating opportunities for business growth and job creation will require all of our partners in the private and non-profit sector to step forward. We thank Huntington and the Columbus Urban League for this major investment in our urban core," said Franklin County Commissioner President Paula Brooks. "This effort will tap into one of our greatest economic assets: the hard-working and entrepreneurial men and women who live in Franklin County and want good-paying, stable jobs."

"I commend the Columbus Urban League and Huntington Bank for their commitment to the community, and for their continued investment in the future of Columbus," said Columbus City Council President Andrew J. Ginther. "City Council is working to grow small businesses and to prepare our workforce for the jobs of tomorrow, and through this partnership, the Urban League and Huntington Bank will open the door for new business start-ups, help create well-paying jobs, and provide a path forward for those left behind by the recession."

The CUL hopes the community will match Huntington's gift and dedicate \$3 million over three-years, allowing the CUL to help grow two to three inner city companies, secure 200 jobs for "hard-to-place" applicants, and ensure at least nine of every 10 Head Start graduates start school ready to read and learn.

About the Urban League

Columbus oldest and most respected civil rights voice, the Columbus Urban League seeks to become an even more relevant and effective organization in creating opportunities for minorities and the disadvantaged. The organization has a portfolio of services, including programs for restored citizens (ex-offenders), early childhood education, support for fathers and job training and placement initiatives.

About Huntington

Huntington Bancshares Incorporated is a \$57 billion regional bank holding company headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. The Huntington National Bank, founded in 1866, provides full-service commercial, small business, and consumer banking services; mortgage banking services; treasury management and foreign exchange services; equipment leasing; wealth and investment management services; trust services; brokerage services; customized insurance brokerage and service programs; and other financial products and services. The principal markets for these services are Huntington's six-state banking franchise: Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky. The primary distribution channels include a banking network of over 680 traditional branches and convenience branches located in grocery stores and retirement centers, and through an array of alternative distribution channels including internet and mobile banking, telephone banking, and over 1,350 ATMs. Through automotive dealership relationships within its six-state banking franchise area and selected other Midwest and New England states, Huntington also provides commercial banking services to the automotive dealers and retail automobile financing for dealer customers.

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