



May 2, 2023

Bank of America Awards Negro Leagues Baseball Museum \$1M Grant for New Facility

New Museum Will Further Tell the Powerful Stories of the Negro Leagues Baseball Players

KANSAS CITY, MO – The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) today announced it has been awarded a \$1 million grant from Bank of America in support of the museum's \$25 million capital campaign to build a new 30,000 square-foot facility. This funding will enable the NLBM to provide the latest state of the art technology that will be used to promote diversity, inclusion, and equity through the lens of America's unsung baseball heroes who overcame tremendous social adversity to play baseball. The announcement was made at the NLBM with bank and museum officials alongside Congressman Emanuel Cleaver; Kansas City Mayor Quinton Lucas; Frank White, Jr., Jackson County Executive; Kathy Nelson, President & CEO, Kansas City Sports Commission and John Sherman, Chairman & CEO Kansas City Royals.

To coincide with the bank's commitment of the new museum, Major League Baseball alumni players David DeJesus, Rajai Davis, and Dexter Fowler will take part in a Bank of America "Play It Forward" baseball clinic on Saturday, May 6 for 50 area youth from the YMCA of Greater Kansas City. The Clinic coincides with the celebration of the winning spirit of the Kansas City Monarchs and is held on the anniversary of Jackie Robinson's first game with the team.

The new state of the art facility will be built adjacent to the Buck O'Neil Education and Research Center (BOERC) which will now be housed in the former Paseo YMCA. That historic building is where Andrew "Rube" Foster established the Negro Leagues in 1920. With help from the anchor grant, the new NLBM, in combination with the BOERC, will create a "Negro Leagues Campus" that will become the gateway into Kansas City's famed Historic 18th & Vine District. This will be a catalyst for economic growth in a vastly underserved, predominantly African American community.

The bank's support will allow the NLBM to expand programming, create dynamic interactive displays, house a gallery to showcase new exhibitions, feature a larger gift shop, and include a more expansive archival and storage space.

"Thanks to the generosity and continued support of Bank of America, the future of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum begins today," said Bob Kendrick, museum president. "Our growth from a one-room office to becoming America's National Negro Leagues Baseball Museum has been an amazing journey. Now, we're building an organization that will continue to preserve and celebrate the triumphant story of the Negro Leagues but also fortify our position as one of the nation's most important civil rights and social justice institutions," Kendrick said.



The grant is part of Bank of America's overall commitment to strengthening the Kansas City community by addressing key issues fundamental to economic opportunity and social progress. It also builds on Bank of America's efforts to [advance racial equality and opportunity](#) for communities of color. The new facility will integrate a blend of technology and nostalgia to create an immersive culturally enriched experience that enlightens students and adults about a precious piece of baseball and Americana that has been excluded from the pages of American history books.

"We share NLBM's mission to preserve and celebrate the rich history of African American baseball and its impact on the social advancement of America," said Matt Linski, president, Bank of America Kansas City. "Our commitment recognizes the importance – culturally and economically – of the 18th & Vine District to Kansas City today and we hope it will be an example for other funders to follow. Additionally, this grant is paramount to ensuring greater understanding and better appreciation of the many contributions African Americans have made and continue to make, including Jackie Robinson breaking the Major League color barrier."

This announcement is the latest in a series of investments that Bank of America has made in the Kansas City community. Bank of America has invested more than \$13 million in grants and sponsorships since 2020 as well as capital investments to help small businesses, affordable housing, and other economic revitalization projects benefiting communities throughout Kansas City.

Bank of America's relationship with the NLBM dates back to the 1980s with bank leaders having served on the original 18th & Vine Authority Board that established the district. Bank of America funded the exhibition *Discovering Greatness* that traveled to all Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) campuses to reach young African Americans who might otherwise have been unaware of their Negro Leagues heritage. In 2008, the museum presented Bank of America the prestigious Buck O'Neil Legacy Award. In 2019, the museum was selected for Neighborhood Builders®, Bank of America's signature philanthropic program and received \$2000,000 grant for operational funding and leadership training. President Bob Kendrick has provided thought leadership at numerous Bank of America events including *Courageous Conversations* over the past three years and at the recent opening of the *Barrier Breakers* exhibition at Dodger Stadium. The NLBM has been part of the bank's Museums on Us® program for many years.

About Negro Leagues Baseball Museum

The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) is the world's only museum dedicated to preserving and celebrating the rich history of African American baseball and its impact on the social advancement of America. The privately funded, 501 c3, not-for-profit organization was established in 1990 and is in the heart of Kansas City, Missouri's Historic 18th & Vine Jazz District. The NLBM operates two blocks from the Paseo YMCA where Andrew "Rube" Foster established the Negro National League in 1920. To learn more about the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, please visit nlbm.com.

About Bank of America

Bank of America is one of the world's leading financial institutions, serving individual consumers, small and middle-market businesses and large corporations with a full range of banking, investing, asset



management and other financial and risk management products and services. The company provides unmatched convenience in the United States, serving approximately 68 million consumer and small business clients with approximately 3,900 retail financial centers, approximately 15,000 ATMs and award-winning digital banking with approximately 56 million verified digital users. Bank of America is a global leader in wealth management, corporate and investment banking and trading across a broad range of asset classes, serving corporations, governments, institutions and individuals around the world. Bank of America offers industry-leading support to approximately 3 million small business households through a suite of innovative, easy-to-use online products and services. The company serves clients through operations across the United States, its territories and more than 35 countries. Bank of America Corporation stock (NYSE: BAC) is listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

###

Reporters May Contact:

Joe Villa for NLBM, 1.646.296.0014

joe_villa@dkcnews.com

Diane Wagner, Bank of America, 1.312.992.2370

diane.wagner@bofa.com