



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

April 12, 2019

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Atlanta Regional Office
10 10th Street, NW, Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30309-3849.

To Whom It May Concern:

YMCA of Metropolitan Washington has the privilege of collaborating with SunTrust Bank and BB&T Bank on projects and programs that meet the critical community needs of youth, adults, and seniors in the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, and nearby suburban Maryland. These two institutions are model collaborators that value the expertise of our YMCA as a leading community-based organization, and by doing so, allow YMCA's community assessment data to inform the identification of community needs and the development of interventions.

SunTrust Bank has strengthened the operation of the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington's Calomiris branch, located in Ward 5 of Washington, D.C. Ward 5 is an under-invested neighborhood in the District with a per capita income of \$36,954 and 17.2% of persons living below the poverty line (American Community Survey, 2017). SunTrust's financial support has enhanced the YMCA's delivery of curriculum-based school age child care to an average of 115 youth per day. Our programming decreases risky youth behavior and enables parents to direct their energy towards income-generating activities during after school hours; therefore supporting economic security at the household level.

Since 2017, BB&T Bank has partnered with YMCA of Metropolitan Washington's Youth & Family Services branch in Montgomery County, Maryland to deliver financial literacy training to adults and families in the Montgomery Knolls neighborhood. Sixty-two percent of students at the local elementary school are eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Meals and 47% of students are non-native English speakers (Montgomery County Public Schools, 2017). Our annual needs assessment continues to indicate a prominent need for financial literacy to support household budgeting and small business management. Year-after-year, BB&T Bank's bilingual presenters join the Y at our community center to provide multi-day training sessions to the community. This is an essential service that has garnered positive responses and requests for additional education.

For the last 25 years, the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington has held a Thingamajig® Invention Convention. The day-long STEM event includes nutrition and environmental stewardship focused exhibits and activities for over 3,500 kids. The youth represent all 17 Association locations, many of whom are from low-income households and qualify for Free and Reduced Priced Meals. As a matter of equity, all kids participate in the event at no cost.



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For the past three years, with the leadership and collaboration of SunTrust Bank Greater Washington's Senior Vice President, Muriel Garr, the Bank and the YMCA have implemented a financial education module at Thingamajig. SunTrust employees have volunteered at Thingamajig to utilize their knowledge, skills, and abilities to introduce youth to fundamental concepts of financial management that are critical to managing money, understanding debt, and planning for the future. SunTrust's investment of personnel and financial resources has enhanced the YMCA's ability to improve access to Thingamajig and strengthen the communities served.

Moreover, SunTrust has invested in the YMCA's belief that the youth learn through play and develop positive aspirations through exposure to new experiences. Through SunTrust's funding of costs associated with field trips, kids at YMCA Calomiris had the chance to attend Washington Kastles tennis tournament, meet tennis legend Serena Williams, and take home a new tennis racket, tennis balls, and a backpack. This experience was not an insignificant event for the youth; it was formative and goal setting. The partnership between the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington and SunTrust adds value to the community and sustains the YMCA as a community-stabilizing resource.

During the fourth quarter of 2018, our Association proposed to SunTrust Bank an expansion of the financial education programming into both our YMCA Calomiris and YMCA Capital View (resource-limited Ward 8, Washington, D.C.) on a year-round basis. This proposal is pending. We view the prospect of a merger between SunTrust Bank and BB&T Bank as a measurable value-add to our cause, creating greater opportunities for expert support in the development and delivery of financial education programming.

Sincerely,

Angie L. Reese-Hawkins
President and CEO
YMCA of Metropolitan Washington

Please note: This Comment of Support has also been submitted to the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond for consideration.