



FHLBank Chicago and Avanade celebrate by giving back

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago (FHLBank Chicago) and **Avanade** each know something about partnership. The FHLBank Chicago Mortgage Partnership Finance® (MPF®) program collaborates with lenders from around the country to help strengthen communities through property ownership, while Avanade partners with local and global clients from a range of industries to advance the world through the power of people and Microsoft.

Among the many partnerships the two organizations sustain, the one they have together is special. It started 20 years ago, not long after Accenture and Microsoft created Avanade as a joint venture. During that time, Avanade and FHLBank Chicago have innovated together across almost the entire Microsoft stack as the company transformed for the future.

"I consider Avanade to be the IT arm of MPF," says John Stocchetti, executive vice president and head of MPF. "I appreciate having additional smart people who see what I need and can provide me with a solution."

A long and successful collaboration among two people-first organizations warranted a celebration, but John and the Avanade client account lead, Joe Mannacheril, agreed that a champagne toast didn't feel right. Given the commitment the two companies share for being active and responsible corporate citizens, they decided to extend the power of collaboration into making a genuine impact in the Chicago community.

"The relationships that we've built at FHLBank Chicago have taught us how to care for our clients and how to be empathetic and help them be successful," says Joe. "Now we're extending our partnership into the community and using that empathetic lens to make a genuine human impact."



FHLBank
Chicago



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**– John Stocchetti
Executive Vice President and
Head of MPF**

About FHLBank Chicago

FHLBank Chicago is a wholesale bank and one of 11 district FHLBanks chartered in 1932 by the U.S. Congress to support mortgage lending and community investment. Each FHLBank operates as an independent organization and is governed by a board of directors elected by its member institutions. As a cooperative, we provide reliable liquidity to our member banks, credit unions, insurance companies, and community development financial institutions located in Illinois and Wisconsin, focusing on the distinct needs of their individual businesses and communities.

We offer products, solutions, and services to help our members fund loans and investments held in portfolio, manage liquidity, fund mortgages into the secondary market, secure third party agreements, and achieve asset liability management goals. Through our community investment products and programs, we also help our members to provide affordable housing and economic development in the diverse communities they serve.

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital, cloud and advisory services, industry solutions and design-led experiences across the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our 56,000 professionals in 26 countries make a genuine human impact for our clients, their employees and their customers. Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com.

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Strengthening a community from within

The community-focused celebration of 20 years for FHLBank Chicago and Avanade began on June 9, when team members from both companies welcomed students from i.c. stars and Junior Achievement, organizations that train low-income students and young adults through a technology curriculum and experiential, hands-on programs. Students spent the morning at FHLBank Chicago experiencing what it's like to work in financial services and seeing innovative solutions in practice, and then moved to Avanade in the afternoon to learn about careers in consulting. Both companies included some practical learning around softer skills as well, like mapping relevant skills to an organization's needs and building a personal brand and narrative.

"We want the students to see corporate citizens who are good at the functional parts of their business but don't stop there," says Cedric Thurman, chief diversity officer of FHLBank Chicago. "My goal is to have some of these students say, 'I'd like to work here someday.'"

"My personal objective for the day was to have the participants develop a better view of where they fit into things and how to position themselves for the future," adds John. "I hope this is something that they look back on as a time when they saw new possibilities for themselves."

Establishing a model for collaborative impact

Creating new possibilities for these students is central to the larger plans both Avanade and FHLBank Chicago have for their partnership. A broader strategy includes scholarships and apprenticeships and giving BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) entrepreneurs tools, knowledge, and access to services so they can fulfill their potential as a vital part of local communities.

Both Avanade and the bank are thinking about their community collaboration as a model for organizations that align on their commitments and priorities to be a force of positive change. "Nearly every

company has an ESG scorecard and many are tying performance metrics to the ability to deliver on ESG goals," says Heba Ramzy, director of corporate citizenship, referring to a common framework of environmental, social and governance that organizations use to organize their goals as responsible businesses. "Working with FHLBank Chicago—and others in the future—is all about scale. If everyone does it separately, they'll do well. But if we work together, we can bring about much bigger change."

"What we do within our four walls in terms of Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) and corporate citizenship matters," adds Cedric. "But if our people walk out the door and into communities that are still suffering, it can feel a little hollow."

"Avanade's ambition is to be the most inclusive and diverse employer in the world," says Hallam Sargeant, chief I&D officer at Avanade. "We're not just looking for people with the right ingredients they need to succeed—we're actively helping them build the technology, professional and personal skills that will give them opportunities at Avanade and elsewhere."

Corporate citizenship and DEI work best when they are not merely top-down, discrete programs but values that are carried forward by employees as well. People feel good working for a company that they know is making a genuine human impact in the world; they feel even better when they are active in being part of the change. For the Avanade/FHLBank Chicago team, the opportunity to deepen their connections by partnering on the day of service and other activities strengthens a bond that is already pretty strong. Joe Mannacheril has been working with FHLBank Chicago for 18 years; John has been on the bank's side of the relationship for 14.

"Early on in our relationship, I told Joe that I was raised by Old World Italians who believe partnership is good, but family is everything," echoes John. "I consider Avanade family. I've never doubted the commitment we have to each other, as people, as organizations, and now as a team making a difference in the bigger community."