

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Columbia Bank Celebrated Black History Month In Part by Sponsoring Read-Aloud at Newark School****Bank Employees and Newark Bronze Shields members of Newark Police Department Read to Students**

(FAIR LAWN, NJ MARCH 7, 2022) — Columbia Bank proudly celebrated Black History Month by hosting a Read-Aloud for Newark students. The Bank's volunteer program, Team Columbia, and its *Black Employee Resource Group*, partnered with *Newark Bronze Shields*, the African-American police officers association within the Newark Police Department.

At the event which was held February 24, 2022 at Speedway Avenue School located at 701 South Orange Avenue in Newark, Bank participants and *Newark Bronze Shields* members read to students, "The 1619 Project – We Were Born On the Water", and each child was gifted a copy of the book, donated by Columbia Bank Foundation. The purpose of the initiative was to promote literacy, commemorate Black History Month, and enhance public education by increasing community volunteerism in the school.

"The Newark Bronze Shields is thankful for its partnership with Columbia Bank Foundation. I believe both organizations share an aligned vision around education and the importance of literacy," said Idell Robinson, President of Newark Bronze Shields. "The book "The 1619 Project, Born on the Water" was selected intentionally for Black History Month. It reflects the resilience of African Americans here in the United States and around the world. Education is a significant pillar for the Newark Bronze Shields; it's in the fiber of our foundation. We look forward to deepening this partnership with Columbia Bank Foundation." Robinson added.



Columbia Bank Employee & Newark Bronze Shield Member Read to Speedway Avenue School Students. Image Courtesy of Columbia Bank.

Columbia Bank also recognized Black History Month through its Social Media platforms by touting black-owned New Jersey businesses, and showcasing how they have helped local communities flourish. A VIP reception was then held to celebrate the featured establishments. Furthermore, throughout February on its Social Media outlets, Columbia Bank spotlighted several employees who shared personal perspectives of the meaning of Black History Month.

About Columbia Bank

Founded in 1927 and headquartered in Fair Lawn, NJ, Columbia Bank has 62 full-service branch networks spanning the state of New Jersey, an asset base of approximately \$9.1 billion. Columbia Bank offers a full suite of consumer and commercial products, including online and mobile banking, localized lending centers as well as title, investment and wealth management services. For more information about Columbia Bank's complete line of products and services, visit www.ColumbiaBankOnline.com. Follow Columbia Bank on: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube & Linked In.

#