



Midwest BankCentre Makes Transformational Gift

Dream Builders 4 Equity to Convert Midwest BankCentre Branch Into New Headquarters, Resource Center & Collaboration Hub

ST. LOUIS (June 22, 2022) --- **Dream Builders 4 Equity** (DB4E) is thrilled to announce the donation of **Midwest BankCentre's** bank building, located at 3529 N. Broadway at Mallinckrodt Avenue, to the nonprofit. DB4E is reimagining and transforming the bank's gift into its headquarters, a community resource hub and collaboration spaces for the Hyde Park community.

The bank building has stood in St. Louis' Near North Riverfront neighborhood since 1928. It was originally the home of Bremen Bank and Trust Company, chartered in 1868. Midwest BankCentre acquired Bremen Bancorp Inc. in July 2016. DB4E has reserved a small space for Midwest BankCentre to retain a branch there with lobby hours by appointment only and drive-up service from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

"We are immensely grateful to Midwest BankCentre for believing in our mission and backing our efforts in such a transformational way," said DB4E President and CEO **Michael Woods**. "We are proud to create beautiful homes for first-time home buyers and to help St. Louis youth build the skills to pursue careers in construction. Midwest BankCentre is forever integral to our success by gifting us a place for DB4E to call home."

The bank's gift ignites a growth opportunity for DB4E. "We view our new headquarters as a symbol of DB4E's commitment to Hyde Park and North City," Woods said. "Our new home will house our financial literacy courses, training for new and longtime homeowners, neighborhood meetings, our summer academy, youth employment, our chess program and more. As we raise additional funds, we plan to add dormitories for the apprentices we serve."

DB4E has initiated fundraising to renovate and convert the building for its programming. Contributors are asked to donate or become a monthly giver via its [website](#).

Sean Spencer, executive director of **Tower Grove Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation (TGNCDC)**, was instrumental in introducing DB4E and Midwest BankCentre. In 2018, Midwest BankCentre donated 1.9 acres in the 4900 block of Gravois Ave. valued at \$1.63 million to TGNCDC for development of new affordable senior housing near Bevo Mill. DB4E and Midwest BankCentre have worked together since early 2021 to ensure the building will be a strong community asset. The property title transferred to DB4E on May 2, 2022.

The bank's donation, valued at \$570,000, includes the bank building and associated land parcels totaling 1.25 acres. DB4E plans to build 15 new one-bedroom apprentice dormitories to be leased to young adults employed by DB4E for its home building and repair program.

"Providing access to quality housing for our apprentices during a critical time in their development and supporting their transition to living independently provide a strong launch for their path to success," Woods said. "Our new home will be the training ground not only for construction skills but also for learning to become productive, financially literate adults who will be inspired to help others follow in similar footsteps."

"We are happy for this opportunity to live our mission as a community-focused, customer-centric, values-based community bank that helps us all rise together," said **Orvin T. Kimbrough**, chairman and CEO of Midwest BankCentre. "Our donation strengthens our impact on helping local communities thrive through access to opportunity and capital. It also amplifies our dedication to shared prosperity in partnership with nonprofits doing great work in our region. We look forward to DB4E's continued impact on helping the promise of our youth blossom into lifelong skills that pave the way to home ownership and neighborhood rejuvenation."

The state's **Affordable Housing Assistance Program** (AHAP), offered through the **Missouri Housing Development Commission**, provided a tax credit to the bank for its donation to a community-based nonprofit for affordable housing assistance or market-rate housing in distressed communities.

Since its launch in 2016, DB4E has pioneered a new workforce development model that teaches trainees ages 16 to 24 about construction, personal finance and real estate investing. “In our first six years, about 75 participants have completed training and made progress toward the organization’s goal of renovating 50 properties in the Hyde Park neighborhood by 2025,” Woods said. “Through partnerships with local minority contractors, trainees obtain equity in the form of scholarships once properties are sold. That ownership model creates a sense of value and pride.”

Participants also serve local senior citizens with free home repairs and landscaping as part of their training and community service. Trainees keep a journal to chronicle their yearlong training and contribute selections to a book that is sold, participating in the proceeds.

“Midwest BankCentre recognized our organization’s vision to transform North St. Louis City into a place where the community has the resources to own and shape its own future. Our young people see DB4E’s growth as living proof that anything is possible,” Woods said. “Our 95% retention among participants demonstrates our success in encouraging and uplifting our young people in special ways. We see a reflection of ourselves in them, and our young people are able to build pride and confidence as they see a reflection of themselves in us.”

Editor’s Note: Dream Builders 4 Equity’s new headquarters is located at 3529 N. Broadway, St. Louis, Mo. 63147. For an update on the organization’s program in Hyde Park, see [DB4E’s 2025 Impact Update](#).

About Dream Builders 4 Equity: Dream Builders 4 Equity (DB4E) is a St. Louis-based 501(c)3 organization envisioning a world in which all communities have the courage to dream, the skills to build, and the resources to own their future. DB4E believes the foundation of thriving communities is formed in equitable resources and opportunities for youth, residents, businesses, and real estate development, which comprise the 4 Pillars of our Equitable Development model. Its goal is to tackle the vacant home epidemic plaguing the St. Louis region by hiring minority contractors and high school youth to do large scale, community-led developments in neighborhoods that have been historically divested, transforming them into thriving communities where residents can live out their full potential. Visit DB4E at dreambuilders4equity.org and on [Facebook](#) and Instagram. More at: <https://www.facebook.com/mark.butler.9022662/videos/10109831000378390>.

About Midwest BankCentre:

Midwest BankCentre's current assets exceed \$2.3 billion and deposits total more than \$1.8 billion. A mainstay of the greater St. Louis community banking scene since 1906, the Bank employs a staff of about 280 working at 18 bank locations in the City of St. Louis, St. Louis, Jefferson and St. Charles counties in Missouri and St. Clair County in Illinois. It empowers people, enables business and energizes neighborhoods through the strength of its financial services. Midwest BankCentre has won national awards for its success in bringing mainstream financial services to unbanked and underbanked citizens in the region and other diversity and inclusion contributions.



Dream Builders 4 Equity President and CEO Michael Woods (front row, second from right) accepts a plaque marking the donation of Midwest BankCentre's North Broadway branch at 3529 N. Broadway to the nonprofit from Midwest BankCentre, represented by (from left) Executive Vice President-Community & Economic Development Wes Burns, Chief Information Officer Kelvin Taylor and (far right) Senior Vice President-Retail Market Manager Ashley O'Neal. They're surrounded by youths participating in Dream Builders 4 Equity workforce development programs.

Photo by Solstice Productions LLC

DB4E's programming under its 4-Pillar Equitable Development Model includes:

- **Equity for Youth:**

- **Summer Academy & Youth Employment Program:** Underserved Black and brown youth (ages 16-24) are provided with personal and professional development training, employment and ongoing mentorship. They take an ownership position in the real estate and book publishing programs.
- **Black Squares Chess Program:** Offering a range of opportunities for St. Louis city youth ages 6-18 to engage with chess through an after-school program, group lessons and play, and weekend tournaments held across the city and in our up-and-coming Chess Park.

- **Equity for Residents:**

- **Free Home Repairs:** Providing free home repairs for seniors in Hyde Park to increase home value and protect against displacement.

- **Equity for Businesses:**

- **Scaling & Expansion of Minority Contracting Businesses:** Providing consistent and reliable employment and job opportunities for minority contractors, allowing them to grow their businesses and increase revenue

- **Equity for Real Estate:**

- **Home Rehabilitation Program:** Providing youth employment, training and mentorship as young people work with minority contractors to rehab vacant homes sold to first-time homeowners.