

Black History Month Feature

Amplifying Black Leaders in Finance



MIKE BROWN

Managing Director

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Michael is a Managing Director in Global Securitized Products at JP Morgan. He is responsible for the Residential Structured Finance Group. The group provides liquidity in residential mortgages and related assets, via asset-based lending and securitization. Michael has been with JPM since 2015, and has been in the industry for more than 25 years. He has held a variety of senior and management roles.

For his entire career, Michael has been involved in structured finance markets that facilitate liquidity for real estate and consumer finance products. His roles have included risk management, financing, market making, syndication and institutional sales of loans, securities and derivatives.

In order to aid his firm and his industry's diversity and inclusion efforts, Michael serves in two capacities. He is the Co-Chair of the Corporate Investment Bank's Black Leadership Forum and is also the Co-Chair of the Structured Finance Association's (SFA) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Steering Committee. He also serves on SFA's Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

Michael holds a BBA in Computer Information Systems from James Madison University, and an MBA in Finance from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business. He resides in New Jersey with his wife and three teen-aged sons.

What inspired you to get into the finance industry?

Out of college, I had a very brief career as a computer programmer before going to graduate business school. I started Duke's Fuqua School of Business with a curiosity about Wall Street, but not anything that I'd call 'driven' or 'inspired.' In October of 1992, during my first semester, *Black Enterprise* magazine published a piece entitled "The 25 Hottest Blacks On Wall Street." Reading through it, I saw people that looked like me, read about their backgrounds and career paths, and told myself that I would figure out a way to meet some of them. It was then that curiosity became more of a dream. But, the pivotal, and I would say inspirational, experience came in December of 1992. While attending Fuqua's "Week on Wall Street," I called Derek Penn, a Fuqua alum, who invited me to spend an afternoon on his trading desk at Merrill Lynch. It was on that day that I saw Sales and Trading for the very first time, and I saw a black man doing it at a high level....in the flesh! On that day, my dream became a goal. From that day on, I only interviewed for trading positions. I guess you could say the rest is history.

How do you help support DEI initiatives at your organization?

Within JP Morgan's Corporate Investment Bank (CIB) we have an organization called the Black Leadership Forum and I am a co-chair. We support management's initiatives to recruit, retain and advance black talent at the bank.

What does Black History Month mean to you?

Black History Month is always a reminder for me that I am 'standing on the shoulders of giants.' Starting with my parents and so many others that blazed trails before me. I am reminded of the sacrifice of so many. Without that sacrifice, I would not have had the opportunities that I have been blessed with. My path was made possible by my parents' perseverance. They overcame Jim Crow segregation in their careers and pushed through attempted racial steering when shopping for my childhood home. And, most importantly, they had the awareness not to expose me to their anger and frustration from dealing with it all. They provided me with the space to form my own opinions about race based on my own experiences. To this day, I do not know how they were able to do it, but I have grown to deeply appreciate it.

FUN FACT: I dropped Finance as an undergraduate. It made no sense to me and I could not connect it to my reality at the time. Go figure.