

# M&T Bank

April 9, 2021



For more than a year now, the pandemic has tested all of us in ways we could have never imagined. Many of us have lost loved ones, and many have endured the disease themselves. Beyond the threats to our health, it has also deepened financial hardships for communities that were already struggling or just scraping by.

Before the outbreak, one survey found 74 percent of workers were living paycheck to paycheck. Since then, millions have been laid off, experienced furloughs or were forced into situations of underemployment. What's even more troubling is the job losses have hit families with lower incomes the hardest. About 40 percent of people with household incomes under \$40,000 reported losing a job, according to the Federal Reserve.

Now, possibly more than ever, our financial situations require our attention. Just like we can protect our physical health by practicing social distancing and wearing masks, we can improve our financial health by increasing our financial literacy.

That's why the Financial Empowerment Summit is so important. To recover and rebound from the pandemic, we need to understand our finances and know how to take control and pave our way to financial stability and prosperity. This Summit is an opportunity for us to join together as a community to help our neighbors access the information and knowledge they need to achieve financial empowerment. Our team at M&T Bank is deeply committed to this cause. We believe that through financial empowerment, we can foster inclusive economic growth and help build an economy where opportunities are made available to everyone.

It needs to be a community effort – and every community needs leaders to push us forward. For our community, Me'Shae Brooks-Rolling has been an important leader and advocate for financial literacy. As a member of M&T Bank's Central New York Directors Advisory Council, she provides insights and trusted guidance on how we can always continue to serve our customers and community better and better. Her work to organize the Financial Empowerment Summit and her perseverance to make it happen amid a pandemic are truly inspiring. I'm confident the educational platform and resources she is creating through this Summit will improve lives and livelihoods.

As you move forward with your personal financial journey, please reach out if there's anything we can do to help. Consider visiting a branch near you, or visit us online at [mtb.com](http://mtb.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allen Naples". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Allen Naples  
Regional President, M&T Bank