

CUNA 2016 AWARD WINNERS

// **DESJARDINS**
ADULT AND YOUTH FINANCIAL
EDUCATION AWARD

// **DORA MAXWELL**
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
RECOGNITION AWARD

// **LOUISE HERRING**
PHILOSOPHY-IN-ACTION AWARD

CUNA

2016 AWARD WINNERS

DESJARDINS

Adult Financial
Education Award

Less than \$50 million

First Place

Community CU
Lewiston, Maine

\$50 million to \$250 million

First place

Carolina Foothills FCU
Spartanburg, S.C.

Second place

Electro Savings CU
St. Louis

Honorable mention

United Educators CU
Apple Valley, Minn.

\$250 million to \$1 billion

First place

Financial Center First CU
Indianapolis

Second place

First Commerce CU
Tallahassee, Fla.

Honorable mention

Town and Country FCU
Scarborough, Maine

More than \$1 billion

First place

Firefly CU
Burnsville, Minn.

Second place

PSECU
Harrisburg, Pa.

Honorable mention

Municipal CU
New York, N.Y.

Chapter

Rocky Mountain Chapter of CUs
Colorado

DESJARDINS

Youth Financial
Education Award

Less than \$50 million

First place

Community CU
Lewiston, Maine

Second place

North Star CU
Cook, Minn.

Honorable mention

Tallahassee-Leon FCU
Tallahassee, Fla.

\$50 million to \$250 million

First place (tie)

CORE FCU
East Syracuse, N.Y.

First place (tie)

DOCU CU
Albany, Ga.

Second place

Education CU
Amarillo, Texas

Honorable mention

Virginia Educators CU
Newport News, Va.

\$250 million to \$1 billion

First place

CommonWealth One FCU
Alexandria, Va.

Second place

Ideal CU
Woodbury, Minn.

More than \$1 billion

First place

Altra FCU
Onalaska, Wis.

Second place

Teachers CU
South Bend, Ind.

Honorable mention

WEOKIE CU
Oklahoma City

BECU

Tukwila, Wash.

League

Maine CU League
Westbrook, Maine

DORA MAXWELL

Social Responsibility
Recognition Award

Less than \$50 million

First place

Community CU
Lewiston, Maine

Second place

Washtenaw FCU
Ypsilanti, Mich.

Honorable mention

Lion's Share FCU
Salisbury, N.C.

\$50 million to \$250 million

First place

United CU
Mexico, Mo.

Second place

Members Choice Financial FCU
Danville, Pa.

Honorable mention

Southeastern CU
Valdosta, Ga.

\$250 million to \$1 billion

First place

San Mateo CU
Redwood City, Calif.

Second place

SPIRE CU
Falcon Heights, Minn.

Honorable mention

Point Breeze CU
Hunt Valley, Md.

More than \$1 billion

First place

Hanscom FCU
Hanscom AFB, Mass.

Second place

American Heritage CU
Philadelphia

Honorable mention

Georgia United CU
Duluth, Ga.

LOUISE HERRING

Philosophy-in-Action
Award

Less than \$50 million

First place

Nueva Esperanza Community CU
Toledo, Ohio

Second place

Community CU
Lewiston, Maine

\$50 million to \$250 million

First place

Appalachian Community FCU
Gray, Tenn.

Second place

Point West CU
Portland, Ore.

\$250 million to \$1 billion

First place

Educational Systems FCU
Greenbelt, Md.

Second place

Rio Grande CU
Albuquerque, N.M.

Honorable mention

Freedom First FCU
Roanoke, Va.

More than \$1 billion

First place

Associated CU
Norcross, Ga.

Second place

Royal CU
Eau Claire, Wis.

Honorable mention

BECU
Tukwila, Wash.

FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the CUNA Awards Committee, I would like to congratulate all of the 2016 CUNA Award winners. We had an impressive number of submissions this year, and the quality of the ideas and projects credit unions have put in place in their communities once again impressed the committee.

When you read this awards program, you'll learn all about the amazing initiatives credit unions across the country are implementing to spread financial literacy, increase social responsibility, and demonstrate the credit union philosophy of "people helping people."

Please join the committee in congratulating this year's winners, enjoy your time at the 2017 CUNA Governmental Affairs Conference, and remember: It's never too early to start thinking about submitting your own entry for this year.



Winona Nava, CCUE, ICUDE

Awards Committee Chair
President/CEO
Guadalupe CU, Santa Fe, N.M.

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David Whitehead—Merck Sharp & Dohme FCU

Jim Yates—First Educational FCU

Paula Nihoff—HealthCare First CU

DESJARDINS

ADULT AND YOUTH FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS

The Desjardins Adult and Youth Financial Education Award programs recognize leadership within the credit union movement on behalf of financial literacy for members and nonmembers of all ages. The award, named after credit union pioneer Alphonse Desjardins, emphasizes the movement's long-time commitment to financial education.

ADULT CATEGORY

Less than \$50 million in assets

First Place: Community CU Is Go-To Financial Literacy Resource

Community Credit Union in Lewiston, Maine, is the area's resource for financial literacy.

The credit union has partnered with the Chamber of Commerce, libraries, and educational institutions—and uses social media and special events—to provide information and education on a variety of consumer and personal finance topics. In addition, the credit union has three CUNA-certified financial counselors on staff to meet one-on-one with members and to provide community instruction.

Community dedicates a large portion of its social media presence on Facebook and Twitter to financial literacy for adults. The credit union provides a daily financial tip on a wide range of topics—including budgeting, car buying and leasing, and inexpensive family fun options—and posts links to articles, tips, and infographics.

In the 2013-14 school year, Community opened The Parent Resource Center within its adopted school, Washburn Elementary, upon learning that 40% of students' parents are illiterate and 80% are unemployed. The Center, funded with assistance from an Office of Small Credit Unions Initiatives grant, offers a computer with online access for parents to apply for jobs, create a résumé, complete financial literacy training, and more. The Center also offers a selection of financial education materials for checkout.

In 2015, the credit union participated in "Open Door Wednesdays," inviting parents to experience school with their students. The program aims to overcome the negative stigma some adults associate with school. During Open Door

Wednesdays, the credit union conducted a financial literacy session and highlighted the availability of the Center.

Community's three certified financial counselors continue to help adults "Refresh" their finances. The "Refresh" program provides one-on-one personalized instruction for members on budgeting, credit report review, and financial situation analysis, as well as financial goal-setting and achievement. The counselors also provide a Keys to Financial Success program to area organizations.

The credit union can tailor the presentation to meet the needs of a specific



Community CU's three certified financial counselors work with adults to "Refresh" their finances by providing one-on-one, personalized instruction for members on budgeting, credit report review, and financial situation analysis, as well as financial goal-setting and achievement.

audience, from highlighting the basics—such as walking through financial instruments, including checks and debit and credit cards—to an in-depth look at credit scores: how they're determined, how members can improve their scores, and how the score impacts a consumer's ability to obtain financing.

Community also established a partnership with the New England College of Business that allows credit union members and staff to take discounted online college courses on a variety of topics. The credit union maintains its partnership with Central Maine Community College, where every first-year student must attend a financial literacy session taught by credit union staff.

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

First Place: Through Carolina Foothills FCU, Latinos Achieve Financial Literacy

A conversation with the Spartanburg (S.C.) Hispanic Alliance revealed a partnership opportunity for Carolina Foothills Federal with Arcadia Elementary School, which developed a program to transition Latino students and their parents to South Carolina's public schools.

Of the 458 children attending Arcadia, 75% identify themselves as Hispanic or multiracial, and 90% are eligible for subsidized lunches.

To meet the needs of the Latino community, the school created the Arcadia Adult Learning Center. More than 200 adults enrolled for classes that meet two nights per week. As a subgroup of the Adult Learning Center, the school started Esperanza or H.O.P.E. (Hands-On Parent Engagement).

As a result of meetings with the Hispanic Alliance, the credit union enrolled a new member from the Latino community who became the "bridge" between Esperanza and the credit union. The new member had offered to present educational sessions on parenting for the Learning Center, and asked if the credit union would provide some financial literacy instruction—in Spanish.

Twice per year, participants attended the two-hour classes every Wednes-



Carolina Foothills FCU created a workshop for Latinas at Arcadia Elementary, with the sole intention of offering educational outreach and no expectations about recruiting new members. But after the first presentation, attendees insisted they be allowed to join the CU and sign up their children, too.

day for a six- to eight-week period. Women of all ages attended—many with infants in arms.

Carolina Foothills Federal soon recognized it could have the most impact with this group. The credit union learned that many Latinas believe they can't contribute to their family's financial stability, and they desperately want their children to learn to save.

Initially, people in the community asked Carolina Foothills Federal to provide one, or possibly two, presentations on credit-related topics. But after further deliberation, the credit union scheduled six weekly sessions, creating a workshop for Latinas at Arcadia Elementary.

The planned sessions included:

- // **What** is a credit union?;
- // **Banking** basics;
- // **Budgeting**;
- // **Understanding** credit;

// **Mortgages**; and

// **A closing** session that tied together the earlier topics.

The Latinas had so many questions regarding the basics that Carolina Foothills Federal opted to discuss that topic over two sessions, and postpone the conversation about mortgages. The credit union plans to add a seventh session in the next cycle to address mortgages.

Twenty women attended each week. The credit union aimed only to offer educational outreach, with no expectations about recruiting new members. But after the first presentation, the attendees insisted they be allowed to join Carolina Foothills Federal and sign up their children, too. The credit union asked the women to bring required information after the last session and graduation celebration so it could open accounts at that time.

ADULT CATEGORY

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

Second Place: Electro Savings CU, St. Louis

Knowledge is power, and Electro Savings Credit Union uses a number of tools and programs to improve the financial knowledge and well-being of members—especially those who might fall prey to predatory lenders.

Greenpath University, a free, secure, online tool, allows members to assess finances, evaluate budgets, and understand the use of credit. Through both online and in-person sessions, members receive education and counseling on the long-term dangers of payday lending and its impacts on credit-worthiness.

Certified financial counselors instruct members how to pay off existing payday loans and look for ways to restructure debt and improve financial situations.

The credit union's Bridge to Prosperity loan program provides members living in poverty with credit building options, payday lending alternatives, and auto loans.

Honorable Mention: United Educators CU, Apple Valley, Minn.

United Educators Credit Union focused its financial literacy efforts on two vulnerable population segments: senior citizens and young adults with learning disabilities.

The credit union collaborated with the Minnesota Department of Commerce and Lutheran Social Services to host "Senior Fraud—Stopping Scams and Staying Safe." The event was so well-received, the credit union was asked to work with local law enforcement officials to share the information with the general public.

The credit union also partnered with Minnesota Life College—a school devoted to helping post-high school students learn independent living skills—to teach various financial literacy topics. These included identity theft, budgeting, credit cards, and "What is a credit union?"

DESJARDINS

ADULT AND YOUTH FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

First Place: Financial Center First CU's Outreach Fills Knowledge Gap

Research indicates a majority of Americans can't answer basic financial questions about interest calculations, mortgage payments, and investments. Meantime, financial options grow more complex and diverse.

Financial Center First Credit Union strives to bridge the knowledge gap. The Indianapolis credit union believes that although consumers can easily find financial concepts and budgeting tools online, personal interaction provides the meaningful application of those tools to an individual's financial circumstances.

To make that happen, Financial Center First employs two full-time staff members to lead its financial education efforts, with a goal of reaching as many people as possible.

The credit union's member seminars attract an average attendance of 25 people, with more than 450 attendees this year. The seminars also generate one-on-one appointment requests and insurance or investment referrals.

To encourage good financial management habits, the credit union offers a \$50 incentive to members who attend more



Financial Center First CU holds weekly seminars in cooperation with the Mexican Consulate to introduce immigrants to the U.S. banking system, and cite the documentation needed to obtain an account and begin building a credit rating.



than three seminars.

Financial Center First's public outreach efforts include connecting with community centers and other not-for-profit organizations, churches, and schools, Health Savings Act business partners, and immigrants in Indiana.

The credit union has relationships with

more than 50 community organizations, reaching nearly 2,800 adults with a wide variety of financial education programs.

Programs include:

// **Wealth Builder seminars** (an average of two per month on various financial topics);

// **Lunchtime seminars** at local busi-

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: First Commerce CU, Tallahassee, Fla.

To celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2015, First Commerce Credit Union launched a nonprofit foundation to take its financial literacy efforts to the next level.

Its first major initiative was a series of SmartMoney workshops targeting area college students. First Commerce now reaches nearly every institution of higher learning in its 23-county field of membership with financial education sessions.

To ensure the audience of young adults will relate to the material, young

credit union professionals teach the workshops. The credit union's MyWay Checking program for 18- to 29-year-olds includes a savings incentive feature: Each debit card transaction is rounded up to the nearest dollar, with the funds transferred into a high-earning savings account.

Honorable Mention: Town and Country FCU, Scarborough, Maine

Town and Country Federal Credit Union sponsored a half-day Money Conference to the southern Maine community.

The keynote speaker was Jean Chatzky,

financial editor for the "Today" show. To make her presentation even more relevant, prior to the conference Chatzky worked with two members on their financial challenges and presented their stories during her session.

The conference included seven breakouts on topics such as budgeting, credit, car buying, saving, retirement, and estate planning, and created an exhibit area with local financial resources.

In 2015, Town and Country Federal also introduced SavvyMoney, an online money management tool designed to help people gain knowledge and improve their financial skills.

nesses on basic financial concepts such as budgeting, understanding credit, and buying a home; and

// **Budgeting and credit building** workshops for domestic violence shelters, churches, and other organizations.

The credit union recently broadened its seminar topic offerings to include understanding health care options, estate planning, and fraud protection.

Financial Center First reaches out to the Latino community through participation in numerous events.

It holds weekly seminars in cooperation with the Mexican Consulate to introduce immigrants to the U.S. banking system and cite the documentation needed to obtain an account and begin to build a credit rating. The seminars at the Consulate reach 50 to 200 people each week.

The credit union recently added an education outreach emphasis on helping people transition from homelessness to independence. That targeted outreach started with a partnership with Prevail, an organization assisting domestic abuse survivors. Financial Center First provided financial literacy seminars and one-on-one counseling, reaching more than 100 of Prevail's clients.

The program often coaches individuals to rework their debt and to put into



In addition to teaching personal finance through its Learn at Work program, Firefly CU provides health and wellness education through an exercise program, which one of its partner companies requested. Between exercises, staff offer financial wellness tips.

practice basic budgeting skills. The credit union now works with 11 domestic violence shelters.

More than \$1 billion in assets

First Place: Firefly CU Overhauls Its Learn at Work Program

To ensure its Learn at Work initiative addresses changing demographics and current personal finance issues, the Burnsville, Minn.-based Firefly Credit Union conducted a comprehensive overhaul of the program.

Refurbishing and reintroducing Firefly's Learn at Work program (created in 2001 to bring financial education to the workplace for employees' convenience) solidified existing relationships with employer groups, drove new partnerships, and allowed Firefly to educate more members than ever before.

The program offers free courses on many personal finance topics. The recent program redesign makes the topics more interesting, engaging, and relevant to target segments, such as millennials.

More than \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: PSECU, Harrisburg, Pa.

Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union (PSECU) developed its financial literacy program, WalletWorks, in-house to ensure the materials directly meet the specific needs of the organizations, select employee groups, and campuses with which it works.

In 2015, the credit union looked for ways to supplement its classroom-style educational efforts to engage individuals in interactive events or informal ways.

PSECU integrated financial litera-

cy into social media, creating weekly "Financial Friday" posts on Facebook and/or Twitter, and piloted interactive financial literacy games such as "Bet Your Assets" and "Team Trivia." PSECU launched "Dough," a newsletter offering practical financial tips such as affordable recipes, ways to save money at work, and how to avoid scams.

Honorable Mention: Municipal CU, New York, N.Y.

The credit union offers a Financially Fit educational seminar series as a free service to its select employee groups, members, and community audiences.

Municipal tailors the presentations to each audience and makes the sessions as relevant as possible by using worksheets, situational analysis, and takeaway materials, and encouraging attendees to actively participate.

The credit union provides opportunities for personal consultations for anyone who attends a Financially Fit seminar. Topics include credit scores, basic budgeting skills, and identity theft. Municipal also emphasizes the importance of saving, providing a worksheet that demonstrates how even small amounts saved each pay period can add up.

DESJARDINS

ADULT AND YOUTH FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS

Offering more than 30 courses—such as “Money lessons from the movies,” “The new thrifty” and “For 20-somethings: How to avoid the mistakes of 30-somethings,”—Learn at Work intends to get employees the financial guidance they need.

To ensure Learn at Work remains relevant to an audience, Firefly sends a survey to a partner company’s workforce prior to sessions it offers to discover desired areas of financial education. If the current course menu doesn’t offer a requested topic, Firefly collaborates with partners to develop custom content and presentations.

On request, the credit union might conduct sessions in Spanish or Hmong. In one case, a partner company asked Firefly to provide health and wellness education. Instead of saying, “We don’t do that,” the credit union enthusiastically agreed, creating and presenting an exercise program. The workout regimen also included a financial health component: between exercises, staff offered financial wellness tips.

Firefly partners with companies that range in size from 50 to 5,000 employees. Once the partner company chooses a course—or even a full curriculum, the credit union conducts the seminar, providing subject matter expert speakers. In addition to hosting the event, Firefly provides promotional materials, educational resources, online tools, and even refreshments and door prizes.

The credit union selects its subject matter experts carefully to ensure they are trained instructors who can provide high-quality sessions. In addition, Firefly’s business development team screens content to confirm that it’s on-brand and accurate, isn’t overly technical, is relatable, and that it meets time restrictions and other special requests.

Chapters

First Place: Rocky Mountain Chapter’s Money Matters Makes a Difference

When a local financial literacy group was unable to sustain Money Matters—a personal financial education series that

libraries host and subject matter experts teach—the Rocky Mountain Chapter of Credit Unions stepped in and took over management and coordination of the program.

The Chapter, representing 10 credit unions in northern Colorado, expanded the existing partnership with libraries to include four library districts in six communities.

In 2015, more than 400 people attended classes on 12 topics presented by 21 experts representing 11 organizations, including The Better Business Bureau of Northern Colorado and Wyoming, Colorado State University Extension, Certified Public Accountants, Volunteer Income Tax

Assistance, AARP, United Health Care, and multiple credit unions’ investment, mortgage, and education departments.

Since its beginnings in 2011, the Money Matters has offered topics appropriate to various ages, incomes, and demographics at library branches located in both low-income areas and affluent communities.

In 2015, the Chapter reached out to lower-income households with the Tax Time News class, featuring information about free tax preparation.

Family-oriented classes focused on home buying, auto buying, and teaching kids about money.

Older members attended sessions titled “Life Reimagined Checkup,” “Retirement Income Planning,” “Estate Planning 101,” and “Medicare and You.”

The Chapter targeted all ages for classes on identity theft, credit scores, and holiday spending. Meantime, “Buying Residential Investment Property” appealed to a more affluent demographic.

Libraries are eager to provide unbiased financial education that isn’t sales-oriented, and Money Matters



When a local financial literacy group was unable to sustain Money Matters—a personal financial education series that libraries host and subject matter experts teach—Rocky Mountain Chapter of CUs stepped in. The chapter now manages and coordinates the program, which offers topics appropriate to various ages, incomes, and demographics, at library branches located in both low-income areas and affluent communities.

received rave reviews from them.

Business librarian Amanda Armstrong said: “The Money Matters series provides the Loveland (Colo.) Library with extremely valuable financial literacy education to the library’s patrons. We know the Chapter has vetted the presenter and their materials to ensure the presentation will provide only information, with no sales pitch. I also think it’s fantastic we’re able to pool resources and have great presenters come to several libraries, instead of just a single library.”

According to Brett Keniston, librarian at Carbon Valley Regional Library in Firestone, Colo.:

“The Money Matters series provides a valuable service, offering a variety of topics experts in each field present every month. Our patrons benefit from the opportunity to meet their local financial experts and gain insight into financial matters that have a direct impact on their lives.”

Adds Keniston, “We have found this series to be a most effective way to deliver financial education to our communities.”

YOUTH CATEGORY

Less than \$50 million in assets

First Place: Community CU Addresses Poverty Cycle

The credit union in Lewiston, Maine, makes strides in breaking the poverty cycle in the poorest census tracts in the state through its Adopt-A-School partnership with Washburn Elementary in nearby Auburn.

The credit union believes that in a struggling, poor community, children often don't learn the concepts of money and finances at home—not because their parents don't care, but because many lack education themselves.

Community strives to teach financial literacy in ways students will understand so they can maintain healthy financial habits in the future.

By having conversations with school-aged children about money cycles and habits and what influences them, then giving them the tools to make good financial decisions, Community believes it can disrupt the poverty cycle.

The credit union's PayDay program teaches fourth- through sixth-grade students the concepts of a checking account while leveraging good behavior in their classrooms.



In addition to its PayDay program, which teaches fourth-through sixth-grade students about checking account basics and good classroom behavior, Community CU offers three age-based savings programs for youth: Monty Moose, Life Saver, and Teens Love Cash.

To kick off the program, Community staff bring an oversized check to explain how checks work and how to maintain a check book register.

If the kids perform well at their “job”—being a good student—they earn a paycheck reflective of their efforts.

Every Wednesday morning, credit union employees work at a mock teller station outside the classroom. At the teller station, students can make deposits and record their entries in their check-book registers.

Each classroom has different “funny money” bearing those teachers’ faces. Community brings a prize bucket from which students who earn over \$100 per week can choose a small gift.

To imitate the real world, teachers can fine students for inappropriate behavior. Students must write out a check to the teacher for the amount and log it in their registers.

Students can use their savings to purchase rewards such as extra recess or lunch with the principal, and to bid on large prizes at an end-of-year auction.

In addition to the PayDay program, Community offers three age-based savings programs for youth: Monty Moose, Life Saver, and Teens Love Cash.

To ensure that any Washburn students who might face financial barriers can participate, the credit union pays their minimum balance to open youth accounts.

The credit union also donates to the school's Parent Teacher Organization for each checking account opened by a parent, teacher, or staff member.

Community provides branch tours for local elementary and summer school programs. And the credit union participates in a summer reading challenges and many other community financial literacy events.

YOUTH CATEGORY

Less than \$50 million in assets

Second Place: North Star CU, Cook, Minn.

Realizing that individuals have different experiences and goals, North Star Credit Union uses a multipronged approach to teach young people about personal finance.

By incorporating financial education into discussions, real-life scenarios, and the arts, the credit union seeks to reach the greatest number of students.

North Star uses student focus groups to support diversity in thought.

The focus groups aid in the development of financial literacy programs and lesson plans. They also bring perspective to education within the school and community.

Students from North Star's two student-led branches shared their financial expertise with peers participating in the Academic Journey.

The program introduces Native American students to the culture of college through hands-on, realistic experiences.

Honorable Mention: Tallahassee-Leon FCU, Tallahassee, Fla.

Tallahassee-Leon Federal Credit Union raised experiential learning to a new level with its Treasure Hacker Weekend. The two-night “hack-a-thon” immersed a group of 19 high school students in the innovation process.

Those teens learned the value of early positive financial decisions and developed recommendations to enable the credit union to involve and excite youth about financial education.

The credit union also held a “Mini-Billionaires Academy,” a summer camp using interactive activities to teach children how to make good financial decisions.

DESJARDINS

ADULT AND YOUTH FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

First Place (tie): CORE FCU Uses Students as Educators Model to Reach Youth

With its three student-run high school credit unions as the cornerstone, CORE Federal Credit Union's financial literacy program challenges students to take leadership roles—not only in their own financial education growth, but that of their peers, elementary and middle school students, and adults in the community.

In its "Students as Educators" model, staff members of the East Syracuse, N.Y., credit union train high school students to deliver presentations to their peers and adults in the community on a variety of personal finance topics.

Those high school students also taught 60 lessons at five elementary schools to more than 1,450 students, using children's books with money-related themes the credit union donated. CORE Federal provided lesson plans and coaching for the students to teach lessons dealing with themes such as needs versus wants, savings, and basic money management.

In addition to developing students as financial literacy trainers, the credit union provides direct instruction to them. CORE Federal staff members teach business classes at three high schools a minimum of three days a week—totaling more than 18 hours a week—and give a number of presentations at schools and in the community.

CORE Federal provided educational opportunities outside of the classroom as well. It established a partnership with PEACE, Inc., to allow students to participate in the local nonprofit agency's IRS Volunteer Tax Preparation. The credit union then trained accounting students to assist in preparing tax forms for PEACE's low-income clients. This marks the first time central New York high school students have achieved IRS tax certification status and experience.

The credit union offered relevant and fun money-related games for more than 200 kindergarten through sixth-grade students at weekend events. The older students play games that focus on savings, money management, and making



An ESM High School student (left) reads "Trouble with Money" to a second-grade class, while another (right) asks students how they earn money.

smart choices. Younger students play bingo with cards that have coin combinations in the squares, enhancing math and money recognition skills.

CORE Federal's event celebrating the milestone of \$1 million in deposits through its various school savings programs generated significant media coverage and elicited a touching testimonial from the East Syracuse mayor. His seventh-grade son, having learned of a \$600 shortfall for completing a veterans' memorial, offered to donate to the effort some of the \$750 he had saved—a demonstration of CORE Federal's impact on teaching the concepts of balancing spending, saving, and sharing.

First Place (tie): DOCO CU Reaches Youth through SEGs, Web

Based in Albany in southern Georgia, home to the highest poverty levels in the state, DOCO CU seeks to break the poverty cycle through its financial literacy programs.

Previously, several area banks provided limited financial education to a few schools. But with the merging of these institutions into large, national banks, even that small amount of support disappeared.

DOCO is working to fill the education gap by leveraging its select employer group (SEG) relationships with public and private schools and colleges in a 22-county area to develop and provide financial programming to students from pre-kindergarten through college. The credit union has established relationships with other community organizations as well,

including day care facilities and not-for-profit groups.

DOCO used its website and social media outlets—including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest—to provide interactive financial coaching webinars, financial calculators, tips, activities, and program overviews. The online presence is a key element in the credit union's programming due to the large geographical area DOCO covers.

Its custom-created financial programs and seminars cover multiple age-appropriate topics. DOCO designed the programs to correlate with the classroom curriculum, and include hands-on and interactive learning experiences. The credit union added experiential learning components at teachers' request.



Based in Albany, Ga., home to the highest poverty levels in the state, DOCO CU seeks to break the poverty cycle through its financial literacy programs. It uses its website and social media outlets to provide interactive financial coaching webinars, financial calculators, tips, activities, and program overviews.

In the 2015-16 school year, DOCO delivered free financial literacy programs to 1,170 students. Since 2007, DOCO's educational programs have reached 16,775 students, from preschool to college. Following every presentation, DOCO provides students with take-home handouts and activities they can use to reinforce the topics covered in the programs.

Examples of presentations include:

- // **Slideshow tour** of the credit union's office for preschool and elementary students that includes a hands-on look at a teller drawer, counting machine and a drive-through teller lane money canister;
- // **The history** of money;
- // **Financial** basics;
- // **Checkbook** management; and
- // **In-depth** explanation of credit for older students.

In addition to classroom presentations, DOCO has established a relationship with GreenPath, a money management and financial education services program. The partnership allows the credit union to provide free resources to all area schools. One is GreenPath University, an online program offering financial literacy courses covering topics such as choosing a college, funding college, types of loans, and loan repayment.

The credit union has found that making the brief, engaging GreenPath modules accessible online, teachers incorporate them into their classroom lessons and activities.

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

First place: Commonwealth One Uses Versatile Curriculum in Diverse Settings

Through a partnership with multiple organizations, the Alexandria, Va., credit union worked with local school systems to improve financial education by offering and participating in numerous youth contests, financial simulations, and seminars throughout the year.

Commonwealth One taught 500 students by incorporating a number of consumer and financial resources into a single curriculum, making it possible to

serve diverse audiences—from a youth detention center to a university.

The credit union produced this flexible curriculum by supplementing its in-house research with different aspects of the programs provided by Brass Media, the Centsables, the Council for Economic Education, FDIC's Money Smart Program, Federal Reserve Education, the National Endowment for Financial Education, and Visa's Prac-

CommonWealth One visits area schools on its monthly CU Days, during which students can make deposits and receive a small reward to reinforce healthy savings.

tical Money Skills.

The credit union also participated in "Kids' Marketplace" and "Reality Store" activities. The Kids' Marketplace is a financial simulation geared toward elementary- and middle school-aged children. Reality Store targets middle- and high school-aged students. Students are randomly assigned an occupation with a monthly salary, and put through the test of prioritizing their financial obligations.

CommonWealth One aims to promote savvy financial decisions by cultivating the students' ability to differentiate between wants and needs, while providing them a better understanding of the important role math plays in everyday life.

Students have provided a lot of positive feedback on the program, such as: // **"I've learned** there are a lot of things I need to keep in order, and it's a lot harder than I expected. I also need as much insurance as I can possibly get." // **"This was** quite an interesting game. Who knew independence and college

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

Second Place: Education CU, Amarillo, Texas

Education Credit Union recognized two overarching concerns in the community: poverty and overwhelmed teachers, who understand the need for financial literacy instruction and appreciate outside experts providing it.

The credit union responded with its Smart Money program, which includes 18 unique presentations created in-house and based on teacher requests and the requirements of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

In the 2015-2016 school year, the credit union's two full-time financial educators presented to more than 11,000 students—a 44% increase from the prior year.

Through partnerships with Junior Achievement, Panhandle PBS, and a youth detention center, the credit union has extended its reach outside of the classroom.

Honorable Mention: Virginia Educators CU, Newport News, Va.

Virginia Educators Credit Union partnered with area businesses, museums, and public and not-for-profit agencies to support SPARK (Summer Program for Arts, Recreation, and Knowledge).

SPARK addresses kids who don't have access to summer learning programs and are at particular risk of losing the academic, social, and emotional gains accrued during the school year.

Once a week during the summer program, Virginia Educators staff taught third- through fifth-graders using numerous financial games that reinforced math concepts and basic money management skills.

Virginia Educators sponsors student credit union programs at two elementary schools during the academic year, and in 2015 reopened a student run branch at the high school level.

DESJARDINS

ADULT AND YOUTH FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS

cost so much? I will make sure I am super prepared.”

“**I learned** how to balance my money more realistically. I think that money management is an essential in life that everyone must know. Or else, debt and more debt will happen.”

CommonWealth One also visits area schools on its monthly Credit Union Days, during which students can make deposits and receive a small reward to reinforce healthy savings. During the 2015-2016 academic year, staff visited seven schools and reached 1,464 students.

The credit union uses its website and social media platforms to address money matters such as debt management, paying for higher education, and understanding credit. It sponsored three video contests for youth members, asking them to share their best savings tips and describe what they're saving for.

More than \$1 billion in assets

First Place: Altra FCU Fills Knowledge Gap

Having witnessed the struggles of adults who lack an understanding of financial matters, Altra Federal Credit Union in Onalaska, Wis., strives to fill a knowledge gap earlier in people's lives with its Life Stage Financial Education series.

The credit union launched the series in Wisconsin, and has expanded it to communities it serves in Minnesota, Tennessee, and Texas. The series takes

a planned building-block approach to teaching financial concepts.

Through its outreach efforts, Altra Federal has provided access to savings and checking accounts. The credit union offers the ability to open an account at any age, enabling youth to develop savings habits and money management skills. After each program, seminar, or event, Altra Federal gives students a \$10 savings match coupon.

The program has contributed to a decrease in Altra Federal's average age of membership, which at 39.5 is almost a decade younger than the credit union industry average.

The credit union's Life Stage series teaches important life skills on financial topics to children age 8 and older. The program aims to provide age-appropriate understanding of financial lessons so students can continue to build on what they've already learned. This progression keeps students engaged as they attend multiple sessions.

Altra Federal's Cash Camp, a highly interactive two-day camp for children ages 8-10, teaches key financial concepts by incorporating hands-on learning experiences with fun activities and discussions. Next in the series is Money Smart Camp, a two-day affair for children ages 11 and 12 that features more complex topics such as simple versus compound interest.

The credit union offers Teens and Money to students ages 13 to 17. The

the building blocks of personal finance.

Students who complete the Money Talks series and score at least 80% on the "I'm Financially Ready" final exam receive a \$100 stipend for their efforts. Since the program's inception in 2013, 214 students have completed it.

More than \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: Teachers CU, South Bend, Ind.

Teachers Credit Union launched the TCU Financial Empowerment High School Program, a turnkey program that provides teacher guides, lesson plans,



Altra Federal's Cash Camp, a highly interactive two-day camp for children ages 8-10, teaches key financial concepts by incorporating hands-on learning experiences with fun activities and discussions.

quarterly sessions feature topics such as purchasing your first auto, and include activities and lunch.

Altra Federal hosts a Financial Aid Night with subject matter experts providing information on the FAFSA application process, possible aid barriers, grants and scholarships, and tips on how to make the entire process easier.

Altra Federal works closely with schools across the country in the communities it serves. During the 2015-2016 academic year, the credit union reached 5,342 students through 194 presentations. Through its "Reality Days," Altra Federal shared life skill tips with 1,426 students. Students often say this day was one of their most memorable or meaningful

and resources, as well as reviews and blogs for teachers. Schools can request that credit union staff members attend classroom sessions or teach a course.

The credit union and its foundation provide the program free of charge to all high schools in Indiana and two counties in southwest Michigan. The web-based, interactive program includes 22- to 45-minute personal finance modules as well as videos, classroom activities, news articles, and games for student learning.

The credit union includes program tests and electronically grades them, easing the burden on educators.

\$250 million to \$1 billion

Second place: Ideal CU, Woodbury, Minn.

To enable students to make informed money decisions through all stages of life, the Ideal Credit Union provides financial education to students via their peers.

Ideal developed its "Money Talks" educational series in partnership with Tartan High School educators and student leaders, and holds sessions several times throughout the school year. The peer-to-peer program, led by the employees of Ideal's student-run branch, aims to teach students

events in high school, helping them realize what it costs to “be an adult.”

In 2016, the credit union also launched Altra Jr., a free mobile app offering an interactive, fun way to teach kids money management skills.

LEAGUE CATEGORY

First Place: Maine CU League’s Efforts Reach New Heights

During the past year, the Maine Credit Union League and Maine’s credit unions reached new milestones and new audiences with financial literacy efforts, including hosting the first-ever Financial Fitness Fair for Legislators in the State House.

In all, the league and state credit unions hosted 36 Financial Fitness Fairs that attracted 6,904 students, representing an 8% increase from the previous year. A group of 634 credit union volunteers—nearly 100 more than the previous year—contributed a combined total of 7,000 hours—a 17% increase—to youth financial education in Maine during the school year, for a two-year increase of 45%.

Volunteers taught youth financial education programs in every region of the state, and 597 classroom teachers—a 9% increase—took part in personal financial education programs in Maine. Credit unions’ outreach to teachers included playing a significant role in the seventh annual Financial Educators’ Summit, by

serving on the planning and steering committee and leading an educational session at the event.

The league continued its involvement with the Maine Jump\$tart Coalition and remained an active participant in working with the Jobs for ME Graduates (JMG) program. That relationship has led JMG to incorporate the league’s Financial Fitness Fair curriculum into its high school programs. The league forged additional partnerships to distribute youth information, reaching some 67,890 recipients through three new relationships with organizations.

The league provided testimony and support in the passage of state legislation requiring high school students to meet financial literacy standards and has representation on the working group recommending best practices.

Throughout the year, the league and other credit union representatives also met with a number of school administrators to build support and commitments for integrating more youth financial education curricula into schools. The league’s partnership with Community Financial Literacy, an organization dedicated to helping Maine’s growing immigrant population understand money management and personal finance, included meeting with adults of



The Maine CU League’s media exposure has increased its financial education awareness. The league has a role in a permanent segment on the top-rated television morning show, with a monthly feature dedicated to youth financial education.

this community and conducting several workshops with immigrant children.

Media exposure contributed to increased financial education awareness. The league has a role in a permanent segment on the top-rated television morning show in Maine, with a monthly feature dedicated to youth financial education. It also takes part in a quarterly feature on financial education on three highly rated radio morning shows. At the end of each segment, the show features credit union websites and financial education resources.

The league has seen a 33% increase in visitors to the youth financial education section of its website, and requests for information and engagement from educators and parents increased 13% during the 2015-16 school year.

Honorable Mention: WEOKIE CU, Oklahoma City

WEOKIE Credit Union provides a pathway to financial literacy.

Its MoneyTalks\$ classroom guest speaker series reached over 12,700 students during the 2015-2016 school year.

MoneyTalks\$ is a set of 14 presentations developed in-house to correlate and align to the Oklahoma Passport to Financial Literacy, 14 financial literacy standards in which Oklahoma students must demonstrate proficiency to graduate high school.

To extend its reach beyond the Okla-

homa City metro area, WEOKIE partnered with TFCU in Tulsa and the FoolProof Financial Literacy Initiative to provide the FoolProof program to the entire state.

In addition to curated financial literacy content on the WEOKIE website, the initiative provides FoolProof materials free of charge to all the state’s schools.

Honorable Mention: BECU, Tukwila, Wash.

BECU’s involvement with Junior Achievement World started with small donations and has grown to include financial and

volunteer support. Since 1989, BECU has provided \$1.7 million to JA World, an experiential learning initiative.

Building on this partnership, the credit union launched BECU JA Community Day, which allows families to experience the JA Finance Park simulation in a fun day of interactive learning that gives teens exposure to real-life settings as they work together through a budgeting simulation.

In 2015, BECU closed the credit union for half a day to conduct 54 Financial Reality Fairs in 21 schools, reaching more than 3,000 students during its “Closing For Good” event.

DORA MAXWELL

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

CUNA created the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Recognition Award to encourage and honor credit union and chapter involvement in community projects and activities. Dora Maxwell was a community activist who committed her life to credit union development, to her community, and to serving the underserved.

Less than \$50 million in assets

First Place: Community CU Diaper Drive Raises Funds, Awareness

The holiday season is a time of giving, when people generously donate to toy, food, and clothing drives to help those in need. Likewise, staff and members at Community Credit Union in Lewiston, Maine, contribute annually at that time of the year to an essential, need for those less fortunate: a Diaper Drive, benefitting the children at Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care.

Two of Community's three branches are located in the poorest census tracts in the state. The credit union initiated the drive because it recognized diapers represent a \$100 or more monthly expense in many households, and money is tight during the holidays. Many families don't have enough money to purchase diapers, which food assistance programs don't cover.

In the 10 years Community has conducted the Diaper Drive, it has raised about \$15,000, funding 400 boxes of diapers. The project took on new urgency in 2007, when Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care learned that to maintain state funding it needed to provide diapers for

all the center's children. This placed a huge budget strain on the center, which goes through more than 20,000 diapers a year.

The Diaper Drive fundraiser begins the Friday after Thanksgiving and continues until the week before Christmas. Credit union staff sell 50/50 raffle ticket. Fifty percent of the sale goes to the diaper fund and 50%, toward a payout to one lucky winner. The credit union also offers a casual dress month for employees who donate.

In 2015, contributions reached \$1,200, allowing the credit union to deliver 35 boxes of diapers to Androscoggin Head Start. The donation allows the organization to redirect approximately 10% of its diaper budget to books and other classroom items for the 325 children in its programs.



Community CU's annual Diaper Drive benefits the children at Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care in Lewiston, Maine.

In raising awareness for the need for the Diaper Drive, the credit union attracted a call from the Rebecca Foundation. Fulfilling a request from the group, which promotes cloth diapers, the credit union provided space for a cloth diaper collection box in its Auburn, Maine, branch.

In addition to the Diaper Drive, Community lives up to its name by sponsoring a community garden, recycle day, fishing tournament, and several other local events.

Less than \$50 million in assets

Second Place: Washtenaw FCU, Ypsilanti, Mich.

Washtenaw Federal Credit Union partnered with a local auto dealer and United Auto Workers Chapter to collect school, dental, and household supplies for Hope Clinic.

The nonprofit organization relies heavily on donations from community residents and businesses to help their patients.

The credit union's Fill a Ford for Kids campaign collected donations for families

in need who use the clinic. Washtenaw Federal placed Ford vehicles at its offices and throughout the community so supporters could drop off their donations. The campaign garnered thousands of dollars in supplies and monetary donations in the month-long collection.

Honorable Mention: Lion's Share FCU, Salisbury, N.C.

Lion's Share Federal Credit Union supports Victory Junction, a camp that enriches the lives of children with chronic medical conditions or serious illnesses.

The camp provides exciting, fun, and

empowering camp experiences in a medically safe environment—at no cost to campers or their families.

The credit union donated \$2,500 and set out to raise awareness and \$2,500 from its members as well.

Lion's Share Federal featured Victory Junction's hospital outreach program, called REACH, on icons the credit union sells.

Rather than setting a price for the icons, Lion's Share Federal asked members for a freewill donation, generating a total contribution of \$14,050—far exceeding the credit union's goal.

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

First Place: United CU Produces Fresh Food for the Homeless

When United Credit Union in Mexico, Mo., learned of a need for fresh produce throughout the summer at Our House, the homeless shelter serving Calloway County, it passed the word to its members and the community.

Some people grabbed hoes and others their checkbooks. In no time, a vegetable garden sprouted up—and so did additional plantings on the shelter's grounds, updating and enhancing the appearance of the shelter.

The garden provides fresh vegetables throughout the summer months for the homeless shelter residents, and gives the community's homeless an opportunity to work side-by-side with volunteers to learn the art of gardening. The credit union made arrangements to donate extra produce to the local food pantry.

Our House offers emergency shelter for adult men and women in its Wiley House, and a transitional shelter for families and disabled adults in Haven House.

In a year's time, Wiley House has served 82 individuals and Haven House has provided shelter for eight families,



United CU staff and members plant flowers and create a garden, providing fresh vegetables to homeless shelter residents.

totaling 3,000 bed nights per year. The daily cost to run both facilities is \$275.

The credit union hoped the garden project would fill a need without adding any operational cost.

United initially aimed to raise \$1,000 to facilitate the project and address ongoing maintenance.

Almost immediately, the funds sprang up, thanks in large part to a generous couple. These members had earmarked funds for a donation and were searching for a project that ensured their funds would stay in the community.

The credit union's garden project proved a perfect fit. The couple even came to help with the garden project, but they asked to remain anonymous.

Through the efforts of its staff and volunteers, the credit union exceeded its monetary goal, and coordinated plant donations, compost, and raised beds to complete it.

United also recruited member and community volunteers to make the garden a reality. These volunteers lent equipment, trucks, and trailers; participated in a clean-out day to move raised beds and prepare the garden area; and coordinated a planting day to put in the garden and beautify the shelter grounds.

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

Second Place: Members Choice Financial FCU, Danville, Pa.

Members Choice Financial Federal Credit Union marked its 60th anniversary with its Decades of Dedication project, raising funds and awareness for organizations that have made a significant impact on the community.

Organizations include the Danville Community Center, American Red Cross, American Youth Soccer Association, the Janet Weis Children's Hospital, Evangelical Community Hospital, and

the Wounded Warrior Operation Comfort Warrior.

The credit union set a \$12,000 fundraising goal and an employee participation goal of 1,500 hours (or 40 hours per employee), and held events monthly. At its annual meeting, the credit union awarded \$23,000—nearly double its goal—to the charities. And employees logged 2,327 hours of involvement.

Honorable Mention: Southeastern CU, Valdosta, Ga.

Southeastern Credit Union's second annual communitywide Fill-a-Truck for

Hunger Food Drive collected the equivalent of 25,000 pounds of food through canned food and monetary donations.

All proceeds benefited the local food bank and Feeding America affiliate Second Harvest of South Georgia. Southeastern matched community donations by donating a second truckload of food.

The credit union hosted numerous events during the month-long effort to alleviate hunger in the region, where one of four people and one of three children struggle with food insecurity daily.

In 2015, the drive provided 30,000 meals to those in need.

DORA MAXWELL

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

First Place: San Mateo CU Scholars Find Path to Success

Selected to receive the Global Women's Leadership Network Empowerment Grant, San Mateo Credit Union created the San Mateo County Scholars Program as a supplement to its existing financial education program.

The two-year Scholars Program is aimed at developing the leadership, academic, and financial education skills of young high school mothers, ages 14 to 19. The program's key goals include:

// **Exposing** students to engaging academic and financial education content to help prepare them for the transition from high school;

// **Increasing** overall school attendance;

// **Providing** financial services to the previously unbanked through education and tangible financial resources students didn't know were available to them and their families;

// **Encouraging and instilling** confidence by incorporating in-person and e-mentorship with credit union professionals;

// **Measuring** success through students' regular attendance and achievement on midterms and final exams.

San Mateo created and delivered a curriculum on budgeting, saving, credit,



San Mateo CU's Scholars Program develops young high school mothers' leadership, academic, and financial education skills.

financial aid, scholarship writing, and job readiness tailored to new, young mothers. The program also emphasizes the importance of learning and giving back. Students create a budgeting and saving worksheet, which new parents also could use to better understand spending habits.

The credit union offered \$10 membership fee waivers to all students and family members interested in joining the program. The students also received \$25 to start their accounts. All students who completed the program earned a \$300 sti-

pend. By the end of the program, students collectively had \$13,239 in their savings accounts, not including the final stipend.

Implementation involved complex issues such as homelessness, consistent address changes, emancipated youth, and undocumented students and families. Yet the Scholars Program achieved its goals, with an 80% increase in school attendance, a 100% pass rate of final exams, and 100% access to financial services. The graduating seniors won eight scholarships and numerous department

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: Spire CU, Falcon Heights, Minn.

Spire Credit Union's Give Back Team provides a unified approach, mission, and vision for managing the credit union's social responsibility efforts.

The team, comprised of nine employees representing a cross-section of roles, service areas, and years of employment, provides leadership and education on the credit union's community initiatives.

The team collaborates with the credit union's branch managers, whom Spire relies on to be the eyes and ears of their communities and the membership. Under

the team's direction, the credit union successfully engaged its 211 employees in 120 events and activities during the year, resulting in 2,850 employee hours and donations of \$26,000 to community organizations, benefiting more than 5,000 people.

Honorable Mention: Point Breeze CU, Hunt Valley, Md.

Following the unrest in Baltimore in 2015 that emerged from the death of Freddie Gray in police custody, Point Breeze Credit Union partnered with the local nonprofit organization Arts Every Day to engage children in the affected neighborhoods in a meaning-

ful, constructive way.

To heal wounds in the community and to break down the barriers of equity and access to educational development, boost student participation, and increase academic retention rates, the credit union sponsored large-scale, legacy art installations in two Baltimore City Public Schools.

About 400 high-need, low-income elementary- and middle school-age children assisted in constructing lasting art pieces that reflect their collaboration and creativity: four stained glass panels within the library of one school and a 12-foot mural and mosaic outside the cafeteria at another.

awards from their high school.

With every single department and branch participating in the program, the credit union never experienced a shortage of volunteers. The program evolved thanks to input from the 22 students in each cohort, who provided a different outlook on the importance of financial education.

San Mateo staff expected to have an impact on the lives of high-risk students. They came to realize that the students, in turn, made a substantial impact on their lives.

More than \$1 billion in assets

First Place: Veterans Find Support from Hanscom FCU

Veterans in New England have long garnered the support of Hanscom Federal Credit Union, located within Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts.

One of the credit union's most successful programs is its partnership with the staff at the Bedford Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center (also known as Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital).

The credit union provides a monthly money management/credit score seminar and a monthly roundtable discussion on financial services for veterans receiving homeless, mental health, and

vocational services at the Center.

Veterans are at higher risk than their civilian counterparts for issues such as financial distress and homelessness. Hanscom Federal supports the center's efforts to help veterans overcome these barriers to financial, mental, emotional, and physical health.

Many clients take part in a homeless inpatient program, where they receive extensive educational and rehabilitative services to prepare for independent living. Credit union staff members help these veterans build a positive financial history so they can qualify for checking accounts or eventually a loan.

Many of these veterans have found employment, including one who rose from bankruptcy and homelessness to become a homeowner with solid credit. The journey took four years, and credit union staff supported the member all along the way.

Hanscom Federal served veterans at more than 150 events in 2015, many of which it sponsored. Examples include:

- // **Weekend VA hospital events**, such as concerts and art shows, providing assistance to veterans in wheelchairs;
- // **Financial education seminars** at military installations that covered basic investment, investment properties and the Thrift Savings Plan for military/federal retirement accounts;
- // **Veterans** job fairs;
- // **Nurses Week** at VA hospitals;
- // **Road races**;
- // **Excellence** In Government Award Ceremony;
- // **U.S. Army Corps Health Fair**;
- // **Veterans** Employment Service;
- // **Heroes** Homecoming parade and ceremony;
- // **Hero Among Us** program, honoring a veteran at local baseball games;
- // **Events** for service veterans at military installations and Veteran Hospitals; and
- // **Chelsea Soldiers Home Expo**, providing information on Veterans' Benefits and Services.

The credit union also has a long history of donating items to VA hospitals, assisting organizations that build homes for injured soldiers, and supporting groups helping veterans cope with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

More than \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: American Heritage FCU, Philadelphia

Through special events and donations from employees, directors, and members, American Heritage Federal Credit Union raised \$100,000 for its Kids-N-Hope Foundation in 2015.

That brings the Foundation's total donation to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia since 1996 to \$1.11 million.

The funds support the hospital's music therapy program, providing two full-time music therapists who offer children a creative way to work through traumatic experiences.

Fundraising events include a Classic Car Show/Member Appreciation Day, Gelatin Olympics, and a golf outing. Kids-N-Hope also coordinated the "Books for Kids" collection to promote literacy, and donated to a radiothon to benefit the Children's Miracle Network.

Honorable Mention: Georgia United CU, Duluth, Ga.

Strong schools create strong communities. Georgia United Credit Union empowers both through its School Crashers program.

The project coordinates funding, volunteers, and supplies to deliver a facility "facelift" for one school, and provides school improvement grants for five runner-up schools.

Accredited schools in Georgia can apply for the program by submitting a 250-word statement explaining why they should receive a makeover. The credit union's budget for the winner is \$100,000, not including significant in-kind donations from corporate partners.

The credit union offers opportunities for community volunteers to join in delivering the makeover during School Crashers workdays in July, just prior to the new school year.

Taking Control of Your Money

Welcome

Come learn from Cheryl Eggerts about all the ways Hanscom FCU can help you:

- Avoid fees at ATMs
- The difference between a Bank and a Credit Union
- Credit score reviews
- Setting achievable goals
- Consolidating debt

At Hanscom FCU, we believe that education is the key to financial success.

Date: Wednesday, October 14
Time: 10:00am - 11:30am
Location: Building 80 CWT Conference Room

VA Defining **EXCELLENCE** in the 21st Century

Hanscom FCU partners with Bedford VA Medical Center to provide money management credit seminars to veterans.

LOUISE HERRING

PHILOSOPHY-IN-ACTION AWARD WINNERS

The award, named for one of the original signers of the 1934 constitution that created CUNA, recognizes credit unions that do an extraordinary job incorporating credit union philosophy into daily operations. Louise Herring started numerous credit unions and believed strongly in applying credit union philosophy as an operating principle.

Less than \$50 million in assets

First Place: Nueva Esperanza Community CU Lends With Heart and Hope

Nueva Esperanza Community Credit Union believes financially stable, thriving families create economically stronger communities, and that access to financial services is the pathway to that goal. But for the Hispanic and Latino population in its field of membership, barriers—cultural, technical, literacy, and language—loom large.

The Toledo, Ohio, credit union's Lending With a Heart—Lending With Hope program empowers marginalized populations to overcome those challenges, providing loans to members unable to gain access to credit elsewhere.

Most Latinos have an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN), but lack a Social Security Number. The ITIN allows them to work legally, but major credit reporting agencies don't accept ITIN as a means of identification.

Lacking a credit history, many members in this situation find personal loans out of reach.



Nueva Esperanza Community CU's Lending With a Heart—Lending With Hope program provides loans to members unable to gain access to credit elsewhere.

To overcome that hurdle, the credit union offers a \$500 personal loan with a 12-month repayment term. A member who pays off the loan on time then qualifies for another loan at a higher value.

Lending With a Heart—Lending With Hope allows members to establish credit, and teaches them financial discipline.

The loan program has made a remarkable impact on the lives of its members, including some who don't have heat in their homes. When Nueva Esperanza Community representatives told members such as these of their loan approvals, tears filled their eyes.

One member opened his own landscaping business. Others have opened businesses such as Mexican restaurants and Mexican bakeries.

From small-dollar loans to establish credit, to vehicle loans once members become U.S. citizens and obtain their driver's licenses, Nueva Esperanza Community has both improved the quality of its members' lives and strengthened the community.

To implement the loan program, the credit union needed to allow extra time during initial consultations. Collecting the data from the members is easy; the harder part is taking 30 to 45 minutes to explain to members what the document states and the process of interest and repayment.

Nueva Esperanza Community finds this financial education aspect of the program necessary, as most applicants have never been inside a financial institution. The credit union has proven it is time well spent.

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

First Place: Appalachian Community FCU Reaches Underserved

Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union (ACFCU) created myMoney-TrackSolutions® for the nearly 25% of

Less than \$50 million in assets

Second Place: Community CU, Lewiston, Maine

When Community Credit Union opened a branch in Turner, a rural town in western Maine, it not only brought credit union service to new members, but also provided a branch for many of the state's credit union members.

As part of CO-OP Financial Ser-

vices' shared branch network, Community puts the operating principle of cooperation among cooperatives into action, with 25% of its monthly transactions serving members of other credit unions.

Until Community opened the branch, only one financial institution served Turner.

The credit union brought local access to free savings and checking accounts, and by the end of 2015, the new

branch boasted 466 accounts with \$1.25 million in deposits and loan balances of \$1.22 million.

\$50 million to \$250 million in assets

Second Place: Point West CU, Portland, Ore.

Point West Credit Union grants noncitizen borrowers the same access to mainstream consumer financial services and capital it offers citizen members—in a

unbanked or underbanked residents in northeast Tennessee. The program fills an unmet market need, providing mainstream financial services to consumers with a weak credit history. The program blends affordable financial products with extensive financial literacy.



Appalachian Community FCU's myMoneyTrackSolutions® blends affordable financial products with extensive financial literacy tools.

ACFCU, located in Gray, Tenn., designs the loans to “stair-step” members to increased financial security and better financial health. The program also provides an alternative to predatory lenders. Borrowers start with products such as debt consolidation loans or pay-day alternative loans.

Along with ACFCU's financial literacy services, these loans help borrowers increase their credit scores. As their scores rise, borrowers are eligible to have the credit union lower their loan rates at no cost. And as their financial health continues to improve, they can qualify for a vehicle or mortgage loan.

The program has fulfilled a social need while making sound business sense. In 2015, ACFCU originated \$62 million in loans, 95% of which went to low- to moderate-income consumers, and opened more than 1,705 checking accounts, with low-income households accounting for 96% of them.

Financial literacy services—divided into two categories, financial coaching and financial counseling—are a critical component of myMoneyTrackSolutions®. ACFCU designs the financial education to help members become more sophisticated about their finances and not fall victim to predatory lenders.

ACFCU advisers conduct a financial assessment, reviewing the member's credit report and offering suggestions on how to improve the credit score and lower loan rates. The session concludes

with members receiving a copy of their credit reports and written plans to improve their financial health. On average, members who go through the financial assessment process increase their credit scores by 40 points in six months.

Financial counseling, delivered either one-on-one or in a group session, begins with a review of income, expenses, and debt. The member leaves the session with a budget, including a debt payment and expense reduction plan.

During 2015, ACFCU held 2,817 one-on-one financial coaching sessions and 112 financial wellness group workshops reaching 1,084 individuals.

To ensure the program's success, ACFCU made substantial strategic investments, investing \$110,000 on training and technology-based upgrades and services, including a full-service online branch, remote deposit capture, and the ability to close loans using electronic signatures.

This technology has allowed ACFCU to effectively reach parts of its field of membership where a traditional brick and mortar branch wasn't feasible.

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

First Place: Educational Systems FCU Bridges Teachers' Summer Pay Gap

Fans of George Gershwin's opera “Porgy and Bess” recognize “summertime and the livin' is easy”—but they also know “it

culturally appropriate and accessible way.

In 2015, Point West closed 208 noncitizen loans totaling \$1.7 million with 0% delinquency and a 0.15% charge-off ratio.

Point West's merger of Hacienda Community Credit Union provided a more diverse membership and staff, as well as the opportunity to adopt many of the services Hacienda Community had developed to serve its membership—including noncitizen

lending.

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: Rio Grande CU, Albuquerque, N.M.

Rio Grande Credit Union partnered with a local nonprofit to create Prosperity Kids. to teach children and their families how to save money and prepare for a brighter future. Through Individual Development Accounts

(IDA), the nonprofit partner—Prosperity Works—matches qualified kids' IDA deposits dollar for dollar, up to \$200 each year. Upon high school graduation, the children can use their savings for college tuition—or to help provide a solid transition to adulthood at age 23.

Since its inception, members have opened 560 Prosperity Kids accounts, exceeding Rio Grande's original goal of 500 accounts by 12%.

LOUISE HERRING

PHILOSOPHY-IN-ACTION AWARD WINNERS

ain't necessarily so." Especially if they're educators who don't receive paychecks during the summer.

Educational Systems Federal Credit Union created its Summer Pay account to bridge that gap.

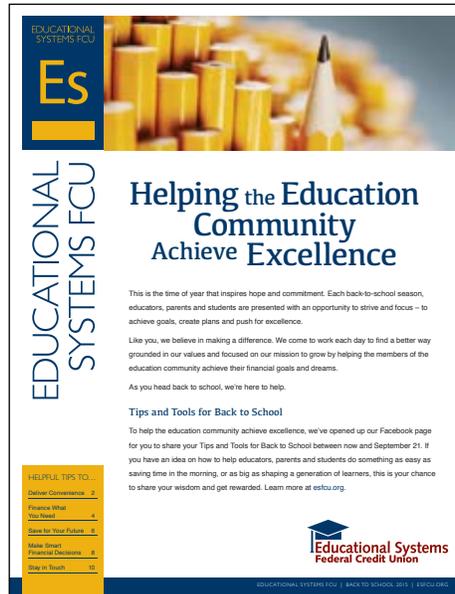
The Greenbelt, Md., credit union serves 87,000 members in seven school systems and three community colleges, and is committed to delivering products and services meeting the educators' needs.

Educational Systems Federal created its Summer Pay account at the request of one of the school systems in its field of membership that sought to help its 10-month paid educators save for the summer.

These educators, without a paycheck during the months of July and August, often relied on credit cards and payday loans to meet their expenses.

The Summer Pay concept is age-old: Save now, so you can spend later. The account makes it easy and attractive to do so.

Educational Systems members enrolled in the program use direct deposit each pay period to deposit funds into their Summer Pay accounts. Members can increase or decrease their contribution at any time during the year, but cannot transfer funds into or out of

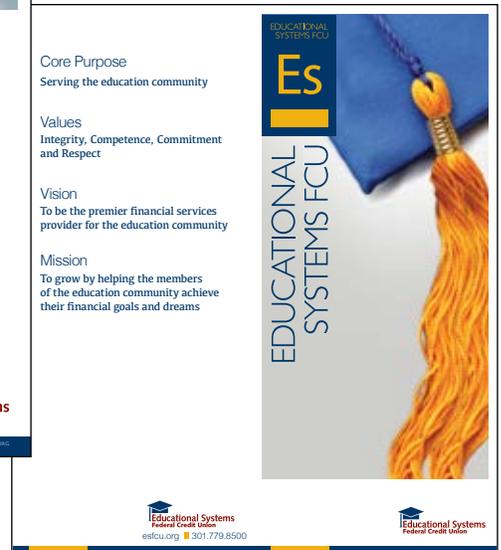


Educational Systems FCU offers educators a way to maintain an income stream during the summer months, through its Summer Pay account.

this account via the online branch or at the teller window.

In the summer, the credit union distributes the money into a member's checking or savings account every two weeks.

To encourage participation and maximize members' savings, the Summer



Pay account offers an attractive annual percentage yield that is higher than a four-year certificate.

By paying themselves first during the school term, these members receive the rewards of their thrift during the summer. Once they go back to school, Summer Pay automatically starts members saving again.

\$250 million to \$1 billion in assets

Honorable Mention: Freedom First FCU, Roanoke, Va.

To address the need for affordable, low-interest education financing and thus bolster employment in southwest Virginia, Freedom First Federal Credit Union created its Workforce Development loan program.

In recent times, that region has been hard hit by the decline in farming and mining jobs.

The credit union partnered with area schools and employers, and streamlined its application and underwriting process to provide loans for the program.

The loans go toward commercial drivers' license training, health care certifications, and other training not considered "education" by institutions offering traditional student loans.

Freedom First Federal expanded the program after it applied for and received a NEXT Award for \$1.5 mil-

lion in secondary capital and \$225,000 in an unrestricted grant.

More than \$1 billion in assets

Second Place: Royal CU, Eau Claire, Wis.

Royal Credit Union reduced member fees by \$6.7 million from 2013 to 2015 through improved operating efficiencies.

The credit union began its "give back" initiative with the goal of reducing 100% of punitive fees by 2017, but accom-

Based on feedback from members paid year-round who see the value in saving for large summer expenses such as childcare, camps, and vacations, Educational Systems Federal now makes the program available to its entire membership.

Members consistently express their appreciation for the program, which sets them up for a successful and well-funded summer.

During the 2014-2015 school year, nearly 3,000 members saved more than \$12 million in their Summer Pay accounts.

More than \$1 billion in assets

First Place: Associated CU's Auto Loan Program Rebuilds Credit

No matter how someone starts down the highway to bad credit—poor choices, a messy divorce, a layoff, uninsured medical expenses—finding the exit ramp is often difficult, if not impossible.

Predatory lenders staff any rest areas, and the downward spiral usually ends in the vicious cycle of poverty.

But Associated Credit Union in Norcross, Ga., provides members the opportunity to recalculate their routes and find a way toward building their credit and improving their credit scores.



Associated CU's Rate Reward Auto Loan Program enables members to lower their auto loan rates by making on-time payments.

The credit union's Rate Reward auto loan program rewards members for making on-time, consecutive payments. With on-time payments over the course of 36 months, members can shave up to three percentage points off their auto loan rate.

Currently, 1,621 members have taken out about \$26 million in loans through the Rate Reward program. The program saves these members about \$100,000 in interest annually, with each member paying \$600 less in interest over the life of the loan.

Associated initiated the Rate Reward program upon noting the number of applicants who were denied loans or affordable interest rates due to their low credit scores.

The credit union sought to give these individuals the chance to rebuild their credit and to prove they could be good borrowers. At the same time,

they can earn a "reward" for staying on track and true to their word with on-time payments.

Rate Reward is available to vehicle loan applicants with credit scores of 670 or lower.

To qualify for a rate reduction, members must make on-time payments for 12 consecutive months. After that time, the rate drops 1%.

If members continue to make timely payments for another 12 months, the rate drops by another 1%.

Add on another 12 straight months of on-time payments, and Associated drops the rate by a total of 3%.

The credit union strives to make the process as simple and easy as possible for members.

Associated doesn't require them to jump through any hoops to receive the lowered rates, and offers an automatic payment feature to ensure on-time payments made according to the member's schedule.

The program builds a trusting relationship the credit union hopes will result in members returning for their other needs—whether it be a mortgage loan, credit card, or another auto loan.

plished the goal two years early.

In 2015, Royal eliminated 34 fees ranging from 50 cents to \$40, and doesn't intend to replace any old fees with new ones. This puts estimated annual savings to members at \$3.17 million annually.

Royal's project management framework, based on Six Sigma principles, allowed the credit union to deliver lower loan rates and higher savings rates at the same time it achieved its 100% fee reduction.

Honorable Mention: BECU, Tukwila, Wash.

BECU reimaged its annual meeting to provide its members with new opportunities to engage with the credit union, while encouraging increased participation.

BECU created its first Member Summit to appeal to a broad cross-section of its members.

The event, held at the Museum of Flight in Tukwila, drew 450 attendees.

Participants listened to keynote speakers, took part in an expo featuring BECU business members showcasing products and services, and participated in the annual meeting.

They also deepened their financial knowledge at breakout sessions covering retirement planning, starting a small business, and home buying.

Members also participated in an Executive Forum breakout, where credit union leaders answered their questions about BECU.

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