

CUNA 2020 AWARDS

Winners

// DORA MAXWELL

Social Responsibility Award

// LOUISE HERRING

Philosophy in Action Award

// DESJARDINS

Adult and Youth
Financial Education Award

2020 CUNA AWARD WINNERS

DORA MAXWELL

LESS THAN \$50 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** East River FCU (SD)
- 2nd** Energize Credit Union (OK)

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Tarrant County's Credit Union (TX)
- 2nd** North Central Area Credit Union (MI)
- HM** Carolina Foothills Federal Credit Union (SC)

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** First Commerce Credit Union (FL)
- 2nd** First Community Credit Union (ND)
- HM** Telhio Credit Union (OH)

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Metro Credit Union (MA)
- 2nd** GECU (TX)
- HM** Commonwealth Credit Union (KY)

CHAPTER OR CREDIT UNION GROUP

- 1st** Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Unions (MI)

LOUISE HERRING

LESS THAN \$50 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** One Detroit Credit Union (MI)

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Guadalupe Credit Union (NM)
- 2nd** Fitzsimons Federal Credit Union (CO)
- HM** Community Credit Union (ME)

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** True Sky Credit Union (OK)
- 2nd** Clackamas Federal Credit Union (OR)
- HM** Financial Center First Credit Union (IN)

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** MSU Federal Credit Union (MI)
- 2nd** Tinker Federal Credit Union (OK)
- HM** GECU (TX)

DESJARDINS YOUTH

LESS THAN \$50 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Financial Health Federal Credit Union (IN)
- 2nd** Delta Schools Federal Credit Union (CA)
- HM** East River FCU (SD)

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Guadalupe Credit Union (NM)
- 2nd** Class Act Federal Credit Union (KY)
- HM** Community Credit Union (ME)

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** CP Federal Credit Union (MI)
- 2nd** Resource One Credit Union (TX)
- HM** TopLine Federal Credit Union (MN)

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** San Mateo Credit Union (CA)
- 2nd** Oregon State Credit Union (OR)
- HM** BayPort Credit Union (VA)

LEAGUE

- 1st** Maine Credit Union League (ME)

DESJARDINS ADULT

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Nova Credit Union (NC)
- 2nd** HomeTown Credit Union (MN)
- HM** AmeriChoice Federal Credit Union (PA)

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Education Credit Union (TX)
- 2nd** Service 1st Federal Credit Union (PA)
- HM** Financial Center First Credit Union (IN)

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

- 1st** Virginia Credit Union (VA)
- 2nd** Gesa Credit Union (WA)
- HM** Commonwealth Credit Union (KY)

HM = Honorable Mention

FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the CUNA Awards Committee, I would like to congratulate all of the 2020 CUNA Award winners.

The Committee received many impressive entries again this year. 2020 was a year like no other and credit unions showed their true colors by stepping up to give their members exceptional service in spite of a worldwide pandemic.

It is the committee's joy to be able to celebrate all that credit unions are doing for their members and communities.

We encourage you to read this program. You will learn about all of the amazing initiatives award winning credit unions across the country have implemented to spread financial literacy (Desjardins), increase social responsibility by supporting their local communities (Dora Maxwell), and demonstrated the credit union philosophy of "people helping people" through their actions (Louise Herring.)

The committee members know that for each award winner, there are dozens of other credit unions across the country implementing financial literacy and supporting their members and local communities in exemplary ways. We thank the winners for your dedication and leadership in leading the way. Your great examples will encourage other credit unions to do even more in their own communities.

Please join the committee in congratulating this year's winners and remember: It's never too early to start thinking about submitting your credit union's entry for this year.

It is an honor to serve as Chair of this Committee. We have the opportunity to read applications from the best of the best and have the challenging task of choosing the winners. We all believe that serving on the CUNA Awards committee makes us better credit union leaders. Please let me, or CUNA Staff, know if you are interested in serving on this rewarding committee.



Kathy Chartier
Awards Committee Chair
President/CEO, Members CU

AWARDS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kathy Chartier, President/CEO, Members CU – Chair

Shirley Cate, President/CEO, Providence FCU

John Graham, President/CEO, Kentucky ECU

Christine Haley, CEO, PostCity Financial CU

Kathryn Hall, Senior Operations Specialist,
Michigan Credit Union League

Shelli McCoy, VP-Operations, Tarrant County's CU

Mark Morrison, President/CEO, MountainCrest CU

Winona Nava, President/CEO, Guadalupe CU

JoBetsy Tyler, President, First Central CU

Debbie Wege, Cooperative Community Advocate, BECU

Edwin Williams, Jr., President/CEO, Discovery FCU

HISTORY OF AWARDS

DORA MAXWELL

Social Responsibility Award



CUNA created the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility 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.

LOUISE HERRING

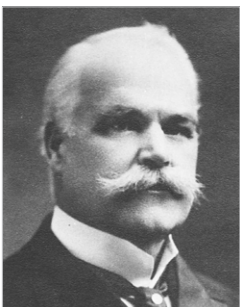
Philosophy in Action Award



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.

DESJARDINS

Adult and Youth Financial Education Award



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

2020 DORA MAXWELL Social Responsibility Award

FIRST PLACE

LESS THAN \$50 MILLION IN ASSETS

East River Federal
Credit Union (SD)

East River FCU Provides Support Across Generations



East River FCU staff with gifts purchased for the Miner County's Angel Tree, one beneficiary of the credit union's commitment to community service.

East River FCU strives to positively impact all age groups within its rural low-income community, providing both monetary support and human resources to those in need. Among the beneficiaries of its fund raising efforts were the Sanford Children's Miracle Network and Almost Home, a foster-based animal rescue program. The credit union purchased all the gifts on Miner County's Angel Tree, brightening the holidays for 32 children. East River also provided \$6,000 in scholarships for young adults in their pursuit of post-secondary education. The credit union participated in Lunch Local, providing free meals to the community and supporting local businesses, raised funds for a

classroom by sponsoring a free throw contest, and supported Special Olympics' bowling tournament.

The credit union's employees are active volunteers in the community, helping across all age groups.

Employees volunteer through Junior Achievement, teaching money management classes in local schools. Employees donate their time and use of their vehicles to Meals on Wheels, delivering meals to home-bound senior citizens. Staff also assisted with a community tailgate event to collect items for flood victims.

SECOND PLACE

Energize Credit Union (OK) Energy Trails Shines Light

Energize CU partnered with its sponsor, the Oklahoma Rural Electric Association, to turn the lights on in impoverished villages in Guatemala and Bolivia. The Energy Trails program sends teams of linemen to rural communities to build electri-



A lineman sent by Energize CU talks to villagers while wiring the village for electricity as part of their Energy Trails program.

cal infrastructure and wire homes. Now in its 5th year, 35 volunteers from 20 electric cooperatives have made 578 first-time connections. All of the credit union's staff contribute collectively 100 hours annually to the Energy Trails program. Energize hosts the Energy Trails Operational Deposit Accounts as well as provides professional accounting and legal support. Energize also contributes to two major fund raising events for the program, an auction and a clay shoot, and provides "Care Packages" for the teams of linemen.

FIRST PLACE

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

Tarrant County Credit Union (TX) Help for the Homeless

Tarrant County CU seeks to help its community's homeless and the disadvantaged in a variety of ways. The credit union partnered with Fort Worth's Liberty House, a 30-bed transitional housing program for home-



Volunteers from Tarrant County CU “keep purpose constant” as they prepare meals for Fort Worth’s Liberty House.

less male veterans with substance abuse and co-occurring mental health problems. Liberty House works to support veterans with recovery, employment, community reintegration, and self sufficiency and offers veterans the opportunity to live and work in a safe and drug-free environment while practicing their recovery skills.

In conjunction with a culinary project at Liberty House, the credit union collected more than \$2,000 worth of slow cookers and dry soup mix for its Crockpots for Veterans service project. On the DE Day of Service, credit union staff assembled the ingredients to prepare more than 100 dry soup mixes and included recipe cards for future meals to enable veterans to transition to their new living quarters at Liberty House.

The credit union also supported a number of other community projects including Wrapped-In-Love Knitted Scarves, in which staff members

learned to knit in after-work classes, completing 36 scarves to be distributed to the homeless, and the collection of \$4,000 in donations for the purchase of 50 winter coats and 65 heavy sweatshirts for disadvantaged children aged 5 -18. Staff donated year round through payroll deduction and members donated through the credit union’s Charity is Good savings account. Staff also donate to the

Salvation Army’s Angel Tree to ensure every gift wish is granted, and supported the Presbyterian Night Shelter by making and delivering 800 sandwiches as well as collecting needed items such as blankets, clothing, and toiletries for the Shelter.

SECOND PLACE

North Central Area
Credit Union (MI)

North Central Area Credit Union Raises \$12,500 During Superhero September

By surrounding children in all things Superhero during Superhero September, North Central Area CU seeks to share a message of empowerment and victory over adversity. The credit union hosted a special event and collected member donations for two local Child Assessment Centers, raising \$12,500 for one of the neediest populations in its community – children who have been emotionally, physically, or sexually assaulted. At the Super Main Event, children could meet their favorite superheroes as



Credit Union Heroes assemble at North Central Area CU to inspire children in their community.

2020 DORA MAXWELL Social Responsibility Award

well as participate in a fitness walk, face painting, and crafts. The event also hosted a health and safety fair with first responders, including Michigan State Police, Roscommon County Sheriff's Department K-9 Unit, local ambulances, and fire departments.



Masks for those in need, sewed by staff members at Carolina Foothills FCU.

HONORABLE MENTION

Carolina Foothills Federal
Credit Union (SC)

Carolina Foothills Repurposed Budget Feeds Hungry

To adjust to the realities of the pandemic, every credit union has had to scramble to modify its budget. Carolina Foothills FCU repurposed its travel and conference line item to give aid to local food banks where demand had skyrocketed. More than \$10,000 was donated to three area food pantries, Project Host, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina and Total Ministries, to feed the hungry in the community. Credit union staff sewed 50 masks to provide those in need during the initial period of shortages. To assist a first responder, Carolina Foothills also donated a \$1,000

child care scholarship to the YWCA. Through its Love Local social media campaign, the credit union supported local businesses suffering losses because of the pandemic.

FIRST PLACE

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

First Commerce CU (FL)

#LocalStrong Has Widespread Impact

With the onset of the pandemic, First Commerce CU launched #LocalStrong to boost both the economy and morale within its own community. But through its efforts, #LocalStrong has had more than \$1 million in impact across the U.S. and even Canada. First Commerce gave each of its employees \$25 to spend with a locally owned business. Team members were encouraged to purchase for themselves or loved ones, or to pay it forward to someone they knew who was in need, or to consider pooling funds for greater impact. For example, after learning

that at a rehabilitation and long-term care facility where a team member's 100-year-old aunt resided that cupcakes were the favored treat, one group of team members pooled their #LocalStrong funds to buy cupcakes for patients, caregivers, and staff. The owner of the bakery, who was interviewed by a local media outlet covering the kindness being spread by the #LocalStrong initiative, was not only touched by the large order but said it would fund several days of keeping his doors open.

The credit union went on to challenge five area credit unions, all of whom accepted and the movement was sparked. With support and endorsement from the League of Southeastern Credit Unions, the Southeastern CU Foundation launched a matching program for member participants, doubling much of #LocalStrong's impact.

With financial support and



A First Commerce CU member patronizes a local business as part of their #LocalStrong initiative, which later spread throughout the region.

2020 DORA MAXWELL Social Responsibility Award

sponsorship quickly gathered from several vendors, the League issued the #CreditUnionsCareChallenge to credit unions throughout Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. At mid-July, at least 66 credit unions had participated. Word spread and the impact grew. When First Commerce acquired a community bank, it initiated a second round of #LocalStrong. With 70 new team members, a total of 220 employees received the \$25. Stories about how the funds were used to help were shared and tagged on social media with #LocalStrong, #CUStrong and #CreditUnionsCareChallenge. The resulting extensive social media engagement and media coverage, including at the national level by Yahoo Finance, helped elevate both First Commerce's brand and that of the credit union movement.

SECOND PLACE

First Community Credit Union (ND) First Community Raises Record Funds for Veterans

First Community CU's entire staff of 250 contributed in some way to the fundraising campaign for the

North Dakota's Impact Foundation's Support Our Veterans Fund. The Fund provides resources for emergency needs such as dental, vision, or hearing care, housing, transportation for medical treatment and other special needs. Fundraisers included a chili cook off, grab-and-go breakfast, grill-out lunch, bake sale, the sale of pink flags honoring service personnel, "Jeans Fridays," and a silent auction, in which the largest bid, a hooky day



First Community CU staff poses with a fourth grade class that helped the credit union write over 1,000 letters of gratitude to active troops and veterans.

with the CEO, brought in \$550. The fundraisers garnered a record donation of \$10,000 to the Fund and another \$500 donation to Service Dogs for America. In addition, the credit union participated in Operation Gratitude, a community wide program to send thank you letters to active and retired military. Credit union staff and members, along with students and teachers, created nearly 1,000 letters and decorated cards to send as a token of appreciation.

HONORABLE MENTION

Telhio Credit Union (OH) Telhio Credit Union Raises Funds, Awareness for Ronald McDonald House

Telhio CU's support for the Ronald McDonald House of Central Ohio (RMHC) equated to more than 15,600 nights — 42 years — at the house for

families to be near their children in times of critical injury or illness. Its efforts included a Celebrity Steer Show at the Ohio State Fair that raised more than \$150,000 and the collection of more than 10 tons or \$60,000 of RMHC's "wish list" items in exchange for a free or discounted admission to the Fair. In addition, the credit union garnered nearly \$100,000 of free advertising that raised awareness



Staff volunteers from Telhio CU get ready for a Celebrity Steer Show at Ohio's state fair, an event that raised over \$150K for the Ronald McDonald House.

2020 DORA MAXWELL Social Responsibility Award

of RMHC. Credit union employees also have participated in planning and executing numerous events for RMHC, including a vehicle donation program, a volleyball tournament, meals for families, RMHC's Paint the Town Center Red fund raiser, pop tab collections and the Kellogg Classic basketball tournament.

FIRST PLACE

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

Metro CU (MA)

“Still She Rises” Honors Employee, Supports Victims of Domestic Violence

To honor Ersilia Cataldo Matarazzo, a beloved Metro CU 20-year employee whose life was tragically cut short as a result of domestic violence, Metro sponsored Still She Rises, a community celebration of life, donating some \$28,600 to host the event. Still She Rises raised more than \$55,000 for three organizations that provide comprehensive services to people whose lives have been impacted by domestic violence. Beneficiaries included the HarborCOV (Communities Overcoming Violence), Portal to Hope and the Ersilia Cataldo Matarazzo Memorial Fund by Kiwanis.

The event was an evening of respect, grace and dignity; among the 250 guests were Ersilia's family, Metro employees, vendors and elected officials. Keynote speaker Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley shared her own compelling story with the audience. The credit union also sponsors “Make It Your Business,” a business-to-business event that supports Casa Myrna, a City of



Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley speaks at Metro CU's *Still She Rises* event.

Boston non-profit organization working towards ending domestic violence.

Metro CU also makes other significant contributions to the communities it serves, investing more than \$185,000 in local organizations that support low- and moderate-income families, children, and the elderly. Examples include an employee Dress Down Day that raised \$10,000 for the Coalition for the Home – A Bed for Every Child, enough to build 40 beds for children who do not have a bed to call their own, a Thanksgiving Basket Drive that provided 35 food baskets to the People Helping People Food Pantry, and support for the Salvation Army Angel Tree Toy Drive, fulfilling the wish lists of 70 children.

SECOND PLACE

GECU (TX)

El Paso Strong Campaign Helps Heal Community

Subsequent to a gunman shooting and killing 23 people and injuring dozens at a local Walmart, GECU launched El Paso Strong, a campaign to help heal the community and provide support through a message of empowerment, solidarity and unity. The credit union established an El Paso Strong charitable account and garnered nearly \$75,000 in donations from community members. Fundraising efforts included sales of tee-shirts, wristbands, baked goods and food. The funds raised were donated through the GECU Foundation and the Foundation matched the amount twice — a total of \$225,000. This was the largest fundraising initiative that GECU employees, members and the community at large have participated in. The Foundation donated 100% of the proceeds to three local organizations that directly supported the victims affected by the tragedy — United Way of El Paso Community Assistance Fund, Paso del Norte Community Foundation's El Paso Victims Relief Fund and El Paso Community Foundation.



Following unthinkable tragedy, GECU's *El Paso Strong* initiative raised crucial funds that directly benefited victims.

2020 DORA MAXWELL Social Responsibility Award

HONORABLE MENTION

Commonwealth Credit Union (KY) **Commonwealth CU Offers Comfort, Sustenance**

As the pandemic caused widespread fear and uncertainty, Commonwealth CU's Community Outreach Project offered comfort and sustenance to essential workers at the same time providing economic support to local businesses. Over an eight week period, the credit union purchased meals for first responder groups using multiple local food purveyors. In the third week, the program expanded to include school workers who were providing meals to students in the free and reduced lunch program.

In addition, the credit union implemented a Community Spotlight project in which highlighted the efforts of teachers, health care workers, and others who had gone above and beyond during COVID-19.

Individuals were nominated by their peers, and received a shout out on local news stations. The credit union also honored other hometown heroes, awarding them \$100 gift cards.



Commonwealth provided food for first responders and essential workers from local food purveyors.



The Mid-Michigan Chapter heeded the call to serve their community by raising funds that helped 325 families that were impacted by 2020's heavy flooding.

Chapter or Credit Union Group

FIRST PLACE

Mid-Michigan Chapter (MI) **Chapter Aids Michigan Flood Victims**

In May 2020, after ongoing, significant rainfall in the mid-Michigan area precipitated the collapse of the Edenville Dam and caused significant damage to the Sanford Dam, widespread catastrophic flooding forced 10,000 residents to evacuate. Many evacuees experienced serious harm to their houses and property. For some, it was a total loss. Within 24 hours of the flood occurrence, credit unions from the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Unions spearheaded volunteer

events to assist those impacted. In a matter of days, the Michigan Credit Union Foundation approached the Chapter about fundraising and donation efforts being coordinated by the Foundation and the Michigan Credit Union League. A Chapter Flood Relief Task Force was

formed and charged with planning and implementing a program to help as many members as possible from its 21 chapter credit unions.

The result was the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Unions Flood Relief Grant Program, which helped 325 families impacted by the disaster. The initial stretch goal was to raise \$150,000. Ultimately, a total of \$163,760 was raised and distributed to flood victims in the form of \$500 grants. The funds were distributed through an online application process. Knowing that members needed cash in hand to help make home repairs as quickly as possible, most credit unions expedited member access to the grant funds. They opted to deposit the \$500 to the affected members' accounts immediately upon approval of their application and then wait for reimbursement from the chapter.

The ongoing pandemic complicated, but did not negatively impact, the coordination of the fundraising and grant distribution process. Overall, chapter credit union employees donated some 250 hours to the effort.



One Detroit CU's First Time Auto Buyer program funded over \$370K in loans to first time car owners.

FIRST PLACE

LESS THAN \$50 MILLION IN ASSETS

**One Detroit Credit Union (MI)
First Time Auto Buyer Loans
Remove Roadblocks**

In the Motor City, a reliable car is almost essential to get to work. Yet those with no credit or poor credit face roadblocks: Either they have no job mobility or they are saddled with high-interest loans from a predatory auto dealer. One Detroit CU's First Time Auto Buyer Program was designed to help clear the path to financial stability. Within the program's first 100 days, the credit union funded \$370,657 in auto loans for first-time auto buyers.

To help ensure the program's success, One Detroit partnered with the United Way through the Center for Working Families life coach program. The Center for Working Families assists low-to-moderate income families with a focus on employment and financial capabilities. One Detroit's Loan Program offered a rate of 8.99%

APR, regardless of credit score and applicants received a 1 percent discount on their loans for engaging with a life coach and achieving a GPA of 3.50 or higher. No co-signer was required, but to assist in the underwriting process, members needed to be employed for 90 days and a \$500 deposit was required. After 12 consecutive loan payments were made, the \$500 deposit was transferred to a savings account in the member's name.

To help ensure access to an inventory of reliable vehicles was available, One Detroit formed a partnership with Enterprise Car Sales. To mitigate the risk of the vehicles being stolen, anti-theft GPS units were installed. The First Time Auto Buyer Program not only helps members get to work but also serves to build a credit history, enhancing a member's journey to a more secure financial future.

FIRST PLACE

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

**Guadalupe Credit Union (NM)
Predatory Debt Relief Helps Break
Poverty Cycle**

Guadalupe CU created a Predatory Debt Relief loan to help break the cycle of poverty for members victimized by predatory lenders. The problem is acute: In 2017, the New Mexico Department of Regulation and Licensing reported 360 predatory lenders making loans at an APR greater than 175%, and collecting \$107 million in interest and fees.

This amount does not include lenders with rates between 35% APR and 175% APR.

During a pilot program run the past two years, the credit union saved 74 borrowers a total of \$428,695 in interest, for an average of \$5,793 per member, and saving one member \$20,500. Guadalupe refinanced loans totaling \$336,732, reducing an average APR of 100.82% to a fixed rate of 23.99% APR. Key elements to the program's success are financial coaching and education, and requiring deposits to a share certificate account.



Guadalupe CU's pioneering Predatory Debt Relief Loan program saved members over \$428K in interest payments.

2020 LOUISE HERRING Philosophy in Action Award

Prior to loan approval of up to \$5,000 to consolidate outstanding predatory debt, members are required to attend a minimum of two financial coaching sessions that include action steps and crafting a balanced budget. All applicants receive the same fixed rate regardless of credit score. After the loan is disbursed, the credit union provides member support through monthly check-ins, and monitors the loan to measure success and manage delinquency. To help members begin to find sounder financial footing, 10 percent of the loan payment must be deposited into an emergency savings account called the Pay Yourself First CD. The funds are not available without verification of need and approval by a financial coach until the loan is repaid. The funds earn dividends at the same interest rate as the loan, 23.99% APY.

Based on the success of the program, the credit union introduced the Predatory Title Relief loan to refinance auto loans with rates exceeding 25% APR. Loans are refinanced at 15.99% APR and up to 125 percent loan-to-value, with GAP insurance covering any remaining balance should the vehicle be deemed a total loss. The loan has the same requirements of financial coaching, and an emergency auto maintenance fund is included with the loan at the same terms as the savings associated with the unsecured Predatory Debt Relief Loan.

SECOND PLACE

Fitzsimons Federal Credit Union (CO)

Mobile App Expands Reach

To enhance its mobile branch as well as better serve the growing Spanish-prefering demographic in its community, Fitzsimons FCU implemented a digital account opening and lending platform accessible by smart



A look at Fitzsimons FCU's bilingual mobile app.

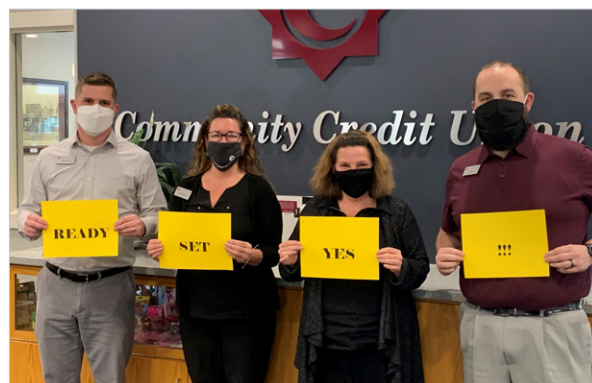
phone and available in English and Spanish. The credit union recognized having a robust mobile site expands the ability to reach consumers of modest means, noting a Pew Research study that found that 71 percent of US adults earning \$30,000 or less in annual income have a smart phone compared to only 54 percent who own a desktop or laptop computer. Because its vendor had no experience in offering the site in a language other than English, the credit union chose to purchase a second site and completed the set up and translations on its own.

The sites have proven popular with 25 percent of new member applications completed online, compared to 3 percent the prior year. Loan volume has also increased, with 12 percent of applications from members who preferred Spanish.

HONORABLE MENTION

Community Credit Union (ME) Credit Where It's Needed Most

Through focus groups and listening sessions, Community CU identified the top three financial needs of the unbanked and underserved in its field of membership: reliable transportation, rental security deposits and emergency loans. To begin addressing these needs, the credit union created its Ready, Set, YES! Loan and First-Time Auto Buyers programs as solutions for subprime borrowers to help them secure reliable transportation. To help mitigate the higher risk associated with subprime lending, Community implemented the Auto Loan Protection Program, purchasing, on behalf of the member, an insurance product that buys repossessed vehi-



Community CU structured new loan programs according to the identified needs of their members, providing money for transportation, security deposits, and emergencies.

2020 LOUISE HERRING Philosophy in Action Award

cles and provides principal balance reduction payments to a \$5,000 maximum. Staff members also coach members on financial literacy basics and work with them to get an affordable loan payment on a reliable vehicle with a good loan-to-value position. In the loan program's first quarter, total loan volume was \$302,318, some ten additional loans per month that would have been denied had the program not been in place.

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

FIRST PLACE

True Sky Credit Union (OK)

True Sky CU at the Ready for Furloughed Workers

True Sky CU provided over \$10 million in benefit to its members impacted by the 2019 furlough of federal government employees. When the furlough ended and members received their back pay, all of the offered products and services were paid back in full. True Sky launched its Furlough Action Assistance Program for the large subset of its members who experienced the longest government shutdown in the country's history. The credit union was originally chartered for employees of the Civil Aeronautics Administration, the precursor to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Among the products and services offered were 60-day loans at 0%APR, a six-month loan at 1.99% APR, mortgage loan payment deferral, free skip-a-payment, 0% APR interest credit card for six months, and free financial counseling and planning.

True Sky was able to launch the



Serving their members and honoring their original field of membership, True Sky FCU provided benefits to furloughed federal employees.

program at the onset of the shutdown because as it loomed, it had worked directly with the leadership of the Mike Maroney Aeronautical Center to prepare solutions for the 6,000+ federal employees and contractors employed there. As a result of these advance conversations, the program was ready to go and could be publicized before the furlough actually impacted any employees, enabling the credit union to communicate that it would stand

behind and alongside them through the challenging and frightening shutdown experience. The credit union used MMAC's internal departmental communication channels to inform employees of the program. It also created a specific landing page to provide additional information about eligibility and also temporarily expanded contact center staffing to answer questions or concerns.

SECOND PLACE

Clackamas Federal Credit Union (OR)

Quick Response Provides Pandemic Relief

Alert to the potential impact of the pandemic, Clackamas FCU was quick to respond, implementing a communication plan and diverse set of options for helping its members. In addition to reducing fees, the credit union offered a low-rate Pandemic Relief Loan for those who needed funds immediately. It waived skip pay fees, allowing skip



Clackamas FCU provided for the financial and physical needs of their members. Here, a staff member delivers food boxes.

2020 LOUISE HERRING Philosophy in Action Award

pay for the first time on Visa products, and increased the number of times a member could use it. Rates on short-term consolidation loans were lowered and term options expanded. The credit union committed to not lower deposit rates for at least 60 days. Fees were reduced or waived for savings withdrawals, overdraft and non-sufficient funds, out-of-network ATMs, loan payments online or by phone, corporate checks, and domestic wires. Clackamus participated in the Paycheck Protection Program, one of the few credit unions in the area to do so and the only credit union to allow new members to apply. Its Business Services team put in a combined total of 1,500 hours and funded more than \$16 million, with an average loan amount of \$66,000. The credit union funded 82 Pandemic Relief Loans for a total of \$82,000, allowed 2,470 skip pays and estimated members saved \$405,000 from waived or reduced fees.

HONORABLE MENTION

Financial Center First Credit Union (IN)

We Care Campaign Targets Most at Risk During Pandemic

Financial Center First CU initiated a comprehensive outreach program to assist members most vulnerable to the financial uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Using data analytics to identify members most at-risk for financial hardship, the credit union launched its “We Care” campaign. The credit union executed the program in less than two weeks’ time, with 60 percent of its workforce at home. The



Financial Center First CU made sure their community knew they were there to serve them in a difficult time through their We Care campaign.

initiative included offering 0% APR personal loans, extended skip-a-pay, fee waivers that enabled access to savings, certificates, and ATMs, PPP loan products, inbound and outbound calling campaigns targeting those possible needing loan assistance or having immediate cash needs, financial education including webinars, videos, drive-up materials, online education and podcasts, updated loan applications, eForms, and mobile branch enhancements to assist with service and process delivery, and more. Among the We Care results were 1,138 members assisted with skip-a-pay, 72 commercial referrals for PPP loans, and more than \$60 million in loans, a significant increase over the previous year’s time frame.

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

FIRST PLACE

Michigan State University Federal Credit Union (MI)

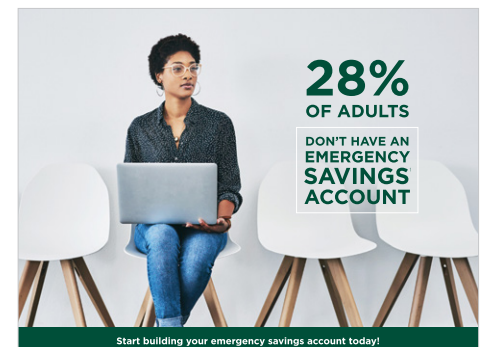
Savings Builder Provides Incentive for Thrift

To help its members better cope with the uncertainties and economic impact of the pandemic, Michigan State University FCU offered a number of financing options, including no-fee Skip-a-Pay, three months of deferred

payments on loans and mortgages, loan extensions, and a Member Assistance loan. But the credit union went beyond loans to help members during this challenging time by launching a new share account called Savings Builder. MSUFCU’s research disclosed that half of the membership – 148,000 of 288,083 members – had less than \$1,000 in their savings accounts, leaving them vulnerable to emergencies. Understanding that starting an emergency savings fund can be difficult, and even overwhelming, Savings Builder was designed to encourage saving and offer an incentive to do so.

Savings Builder is a blended-rate, dividend-bearing share account with three tiers; the lower balances earn the highest dividends. Each dividend rate applies only to the portion of the account balance within each balance tier, not on the entire account balance. The highest interest rate is offered on Tier 1 savings of \$0 - \$999.99. Tier 2 rates apply to balances of \$1,000 - \$1,999.99 and Tier 3 rates to \$2,000 or more.

The Savings Builder dividend rate is up to nine times higher than that offered on the credit union’s standard



Michigan State University FCU introduced a new account, Savings Builder, to encourage savings in uncertain times.

2020 LOUISE HERRING Philosophy in Action Award

savings option. By helping members quickly save for unbudgeted expenses — such as car repairs or medical costs — Savings Builder also helps prevent new or additional debt. Its ultimate purpose is to assist members with developing positive savings habits and to begin to secure their financial futures.

As of July 22, 2020, the credit union had opened more than 1,100 Savings Builder accounts, with a total balance of \$3,585,605 — averaging \$3,236 per share. The account is most popular with the credit union's Gen Y members (42 percent), followed by Gen X (20 percent). Forty percent of all Savings Builder accounts have been opened in the credit union's online account management system, and 19 percent have been opened through its mobile application.

SECOND PLACE

Tinker Federal Credit Union Member Solutions Provides Path to Financial Stability



Tinker FCU's Member Solutions Department helps members who may be experiencing financial troubles, those who are seeking financial counseling as well as those looking to enhance their financial security. The Department has four full-time employees dedicated to assisting members, including a bilingual team member fluent in English and Spanish. Understanding that each member's path to financial stability is different, the Member Solutions staff



GECU Staff worked with CFEP and local high school students to offer tax preparation services to the community.

works with members on an array of issues such as raising their credit scores, consolidating their loans, building financial plans, working towards home ownership, or other areas. TFCU's members receive professional and specialized attention for their unique financial situations, provided by employees who have a passion for helping. The Member Solutions Department evolved from TFCU's Credit Solutions Department, which had offered counseling to those in financial difficulty. The credit union is one of the first financial institutions in Oklahoma to implement a department of this kind.

HONORABLE MENTION

GECU (TX)

GECU's Support for VITA Helps 10,000 with Tax Returns

In 2019, with major support from GECU, El Paso's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) filed more than 10,000 tax returns, returned more than \$16 million to low-income individuals, and saved community members nearly \$3 million in filing fees. These

results were made possible by 302 volunteers assisting with tax preparation at 25 sites. El Paso's VITA program is sponsored by the Coalition for Family Economic Progress's (CFEP), an alliance of private, public, and nonprofit organizations dedicated to economic empowerment. As a lead organization, GECU collaborated with CFEP to expand the program, including offering branch locations as tax preparation sites and providing many employees as volunteers. A key element in the success of the program was GECU's recruitment of high school students as tax preparers. Certified by the IRS, the students also served as site coordinators in charge of operations, putting their technological expertise in service to the community. GECU's professionals worked with the students to improve their leadership and collaborative skills, providing them with a more well-rounded skill set. To get the word out about VITA, GECU's communication team activated an eight-tier publicity plan that included bilingual materials.

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award

FIRST PLACE

LESS THAN \$50 MILLION IN ASSETS

Financial Health Federal
Credit Union (IN)

Loans for Teens Propel Them Forward



Financial Health FCU partnered with the community organization FREEWHEELIN' to provide financial literacy training and a youth loan program for teens aged 14 to 22. FREEWHEELIN' seeks to provide accessible bicycles as well as to teach youth life and leadership skills that improve their physical and mental well-being. FREEWHEELIN' reached out to the credit union to design the loans after failing to find anyone in the banking community who was willing to lend to teens younger than age 18. The program operates in the 46205 zip code of Indianapolis, where 23 percent of the population are living below the poverty line, with 38 percent of the area's children under 18 living in poverty.

Developed to assist at-risk youth, the FREEWHEELIN' Youth Education program provides teens with a paid apprenticeship program, entrepreneurship and financial education classes, customer service and interpersonal communications training, and includes the Apron Mechanics Program. The Youth Education and Employment Training Loan is provided within the entrepreneurship training for participants to help them purchase equipment or start a business. The training includes coaching, financial counseling, and assistance in creating

a business plan or futures plan.

Financial Health provides the educational materials and coaching. Teens who complete the training program are eligible for the loan. The loan is secured by grant funds and approved by the FREEWHEELIN' executive team. The nature of this secured loan makes it available to participants of any age, as long as they complete the training program and get executive approval. When the teens become members of the credit union and obtain their first loan, they receive one-on-one counseling about the loan and the actions they need to take to obtain a good credit score. The counseling is customized to ensure it is valuable and meaningful. Throughout the loan term, the credit union provides support, guidance, and encouragement.

SECOND PLACE

Delta Schools Federal
Credit Union (CA)

Budgeting App Resonates with Students

Delta Schools FCU uses the Bite of Reality application to teach participants the basics of budgeting in a safe

environment. In a hands-on simulation, students can fail and learn from poor purchasing decisions. Bite of Reality provides the student an identity, spouse, child, and monthly income, from which students need to purchase food, transportation, child-care, clothing, and manage credit card debit, all while staying in budget. Its gamification element is fun and resonates with students. The credit union also teaches an internally created budgeting program for a local junior college/high school after-school financial course. Working in groups, students must agree on expenditures, which stimulates a robust discussion. At the beginning of the school year, the credit union also challenges students to save \$5 a week for 35 weeks for their end-of-year goals; if they do so, the credit union deposits \$5 in the 35th week. In addition, the credit union's Community Youth Outreach Manager taught several classes on financial well-being and how to be a successful and powerful woman in the community at a city-wide Women's Empowerment Day for all 8th grade girls.



Delta Schools FCU volunteers take a break from their *Bite of Reality* program at a local high school to pose with other volunteers at the event.

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award



East River FCU staff presents to Dakota State University students on various relevant financial concepts.

HONORABLE MENTION

East River Federal Credit Union (SD) Partnerships Fuel Financial Education Efforts

East River FCU partnered with an elementary school and college to provide financial education.

The credit union used the Junior Achievement program to introduce third grade students to financial literacy concepts including the choices people make with money and recognizing methods of payment. The program also helps students understand the importance of economic exchange within a community. The program was taught in the classroom over five sessions. Credit union staff presented to a math class at Dakota State University, speaking with students about financial concepts such as annual percentage yield, compound interest, auto loans, and budgeting. East River also worked with professors to integrate financial concepts within the curriculum. East River participates in the PeeWee Penguin club to encourage youth to save, providing prizes when money is deposited. The credit union also

helps students when they open their first checking/savings accounts to access money management tools.

FIRST PLACE

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

Guadalupe Credit Union (NM) Bilingual Programs Exceed Goals

To meet the demands of its expanded financial education and outreach efforts, Guadalupe CU recruited additional staff and volunteers. In 2019, the credit union hosted 1,044 students at seven Reality Fairs, exceeding its goal of teaching 1,000 high school students. Guadalupe also eclipsed its goal of reaching 60 students through its BizKids program, helping 80 students complete the program. Its initiatives are offered in English and Spanish.

Reality Fairs gives students a hands-on life simulation experience. Provided an entry-level occupation and income, they complete a budget requiring them to live within their monthly salary while paying for basics. Having encountered emotional breakdowns during the simulations, Guadalupe has financial coaches

on hand to assist students for whom topics such as home ownership and food insecurity can trigger emotional stress.

The credit union offers the BizKids entrepreneurship program to the City of Santa Fe's Summer Program participants. The program seeks to help the next generation develop important skills and have fun in the process. Through their BizKids experience, participants not only learn how to establish their own businesses, but also become empowered to generate their own income and manage their profits, including giving back to their communities. The program also reinforces critical math and social skills. BizKids culminates with a trade show for the children to sell the products they've developed. City officials attend and support the trade show.

The credit union partners with Prosperity Works, an advocacy group that seeks changes in attitudes, behaviors and policies that reinforce systemic poverty, to provide Child Savings Accounts in which youth can earn matched deposits for savings contributions.



Guadalupe CU staff working at a BizKids event, where they helped to teach students about financial principles.

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award

The credit union also offers financial education for their families. The credit union also partners with YouthWorks, an organization that re-connects at-risk and disadvantaged youth to the community through education, employment training and job placement. The credit union provides classes, opens Teen Checking accounts, and offers credit union internship opportunities. Teen Checking and financial education are also offered in conjunction with the Dream Tree Project that offers emergency teen shelter, a transitional home and resources for youth. Guadalupe's Teen Checking is a non-custodial account designed for teens who may not have a responsible adult in their lives to open an account for them and don't have access to a place to save or cash a check. Features include no requirement for a parent or legal guardian signature, free financial coaching, a VISA debit card, access to electronic services, and no monthly or usage fees. The credit also offers the Kirby Kangaroo Club for young savers aged 0-12.

SECOND PLACE

Class Act Federal Credit Union (KY) New Initiatives Expand Education Efforts

Class Act FCU expanded its financial education efforts in 2019 by launching several new tactics, methods and technologies including hosting free workshops within the Louisville community. The credit union coordinated a week-long program with Junior Achievement,



Class Act FCU staff promoted financial literacy across a vast range of age groups, starting with elementary students through their partnership with the YMCA.

reaching thousands of high school students. A YouTube channel was created and a series of short videos on financial topics produced. The credit union initiated a relationship with the University of Louisville's School of Business and created a financial literacy program that was integrated into the Freshman 101 course curriculum. Students were instructed to complete the on-line Banzai course and attend an in-person presentation that incorporated Kahoot!, the popular interactive game. The credit union also collaborated with the YMCA and its Child Enrichment Program, promoting financial literacy. It expanded its informational series to include recorded sessions on-line to attract young adults not able to attend in person. The credit union also has operated two high schools branches for the past 10 years.

HONORABLE MENTION

Community Credit Union (ME) Answering the Call for Youth Education

Community CU strives to be the local leader in providing financial education, working hard to always say "yes" to requests to teach financial concepts. All staff members take a financial literacy course so they are equipped to share their knowledge with members and the community throughout the year. The credit union has formed partnerships with libraries, social service agencies, schools and other organizations. Its ongoing efforts in youth financial education include offering the age-based saving accounts Monty Moose, Life Saver and Teens Love Cash. Its Adopt-A-School partnership with Washburn School serves to help students develop savings habits and responsible money management skills. To overcome any

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award

financial barriers, the credit union pays the minimum balances to open the youth accounts for Washburn students. Students in the 5th and 6th grades are eligible for the Pay-Day program, designed to teach the concepts of a checking account at the same time leveraging good classroom behavior. The credit union also participates in Financial Fitness Fairs.

FIRST PLACE

\$250 MILLION- \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

CP Federal Credit Union (MI)

Innovative Savings Account Launched

CP FCU enrolled 548 kindergarten students in its brand-new children's savings account program called Jackson \$aves. Jackson \$aves is a program designed to assist with post-high school education and training expenses. Incoming students are eligible to opt-in to the program as part of their school's kindergarten enrollment process. Kindergartners who opt in receive a \$50 opening deposit (based on availability of funds) into their Jackson \$aves account. Students can earn incentives to help grow their account. In addition, CP provided a free Berenstain Bears Trouble with Money book to each kindergartner, with funding from a grant from the Michigan Credit Union Foundation.

To support and encourage savings, Jackson \$aves is designed as a deposit-only account. Withdrawals are only permitted for post-secondary education or training and enrollment is restricted to the kindergarten year. CP FCU partnered with the Jackson



548 students were enrolled in CP FCU's Jackson \$aves program.

Community Foundation, the Jackson County Intermediate School District and the schools they serve to implement the program.

In 2019, the credit union's financial literacy program reached 14,943 unique individuals. In the 2020 pandemic-shortened school year, the program reached 710 students, but its Banzai online learning site captured 2,083 unique views since its launch in January 2020. The online learning platform is a resource for members and also available at no charge to the credit union's community partners, the United Ways of Jackson County and Washtenaw County, Jackson College, and the Jackson Big Brothers Big Sisters programs. The credit union's online learning library logged 7,388 total page views and 5,985 unique visitors. Its online coaching program

reached 151 users.

CP FCU has been providing financial literacy programs to area schools since 1991 and boasts 29 student run credit unions and more than 50 Partners in Education Schools. Its programs include financial literacy lessons, activities and games and are facilitated by six full-time staff members.

SECOND PLACE

Resource One Credit Union (TX) Youth Outreach Program Supports State Mandated Instruction

Resource One CU created its Youth Financial Outreach program to stress the importance of establishing a financial identity and to help young people to begin developing habits that will contribute to a positive and healthy financial well

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award



High school students take part in a Resource One CU-run Reality Fair.

being. Resource One and its community partners collaborated with six educational institutions to conduct Reality Fairs, boosting the financial knowledge of a total of 1,567 middle, high school and college students. The credit union's partnership with Dallas College provided an opportunity for local high schools to bus in students, creating access for more schools to participate in one Fair. The Reality Fair experience introduces students to basic financial skills needed in adult life. The credit union believes the hands-on approach to money management aligns with and facilitates an understanding of the concepts presented in the financial literacy classroom instruction mandated by the state. In addition the credit union held a BizKids competition, provided classroom instruction, hosted field trips for elementary schools, and produced a financial literacy curriculum for elementary education.

HONORABLE MENTION

TopLine Credit Union (MN) Classroom Instruction, YouTube Reach Urban Youth

TopLine CU has partnered with YouthCARE Minnesota's Community Service Star Employment Training program since 2014. The program provides meaningful employment and service-learning opportunities for urban youth from diverse ethnic,

cultural and racial backgrounds. For its part, the credit union holds a financial literacy workshop emphasizing goal setting, how to budget, saving and other relevant financial topics. In the past 12 months, the credit union's financial literacy efforts reached 1,970 youth providing money management instruction onsite as well as in the community through various partnerships with schools and organizations. TopLine developed YouTube videos, created by young adult interns and based on topics their survey of peers found to be of interest. TopLine offers three age-based youth savings programs to encourage youth, from toddlers to teens, to get a financial head start by establishing healthy savings habits and responsible money management skills. The credit union offers up to a \$25 match on initial deposits to a new youth savings or checking account. Since inception of this program, TopLine has awarded matches to 3,287 new youth members, a total of \$82,175.



TopLine CU's various partnerships and efforts with regards to financial education reached almost 2,000 students in 2020.

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award

FIRST PLACE

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

San Mateo Credit Union (CA)

Customized Programs Meet Educational Needs

To address the needs of the community in which the low-income designation for a family of four has skyrocketed to a \$139,200 annual income, San Mateo CU focused on four components for its 2019 financial education efforts: Custom tailored high school programming, a specialized program for incarcerated and at-risk youth, financial aid workshops for the college bound, and a scholarship program for high school and elementary students.

Its Making Change High School Program is an eight-week financial foundations workshop series program that culminates with a Bite of Reality fair. Having an extended presence in the classroom allows students to get to know the credit union as a community partner and fosters a relationship

between the credit union and the student, increasing the likelihood students will reach out to a credit union for future assistance. SMCU partnered with four local high schools in 2019, conducting 78 Making Change workshops reaching 1,408 attendees, and opening 169 youth accounts as a result of the presentations. In addition, the credit union offers the EverFi online education platform to supplement the classroom instruction.

The credit union collaborated with the San Mateo County Office of Education to provide specialized training for incarcerated and vulnerable youth, creating a curriculum that addressed specific issues. For example, these youth have experienced instability and poverty throughout their lives, yet are expected to write checks and pay court fees when they have little to no banking experience. The credit union delivered its customized workshop content within the

confines of juvenile halls at the Office of Education's three schools, making 45 presentations to 385 youth participants. The efforts gained praise from the staff and administration. Noted the director to the Office of Education: "Wow! Thank you all for being so open, caring and willing to serve our most vulnerable and fragile populations."

In partnership with San Mateo County Community Colleges District and local high schools, the credit union participated in 10 Cash for College workshops providing 405 families with hands-on assistance completing their challenging FAFSA applications.

The credit union offers two \$5,000 scholarships to high school students based on academic standing, school involvement, community service, and an essay. In 2019, the credit union introduced a Youth Scholarship Program for elementary age students. The program offers the opportunity to win a \$500 scholarship savings award to students living in a low-income market area, with the winner chosen at random.

SECOND PLACE

Oregon State Credit Union (OR)

Train the Trainer, Grants for Teachers Provide Sustainable Solutions

Oregon State CU looks for opportunities to create sustaining financial education solutions and maximize the impact of its one-person Community Education Department. The credit union expanded its Train the Trainer program for use in schools to



San Mateo CU staff pose with some young scholars.

2020 DESJARDINS Youth Financial Education Award



An Oregon State CU staff member with students that just took part in a “Financial Road Map” training session.

help teachers meet new social studies common core requirements. Previously, it had established Train the Trainer programs with the Department of Corrections and community organizations. To supplement often paltry budgets for curriculum additions or classroom materials, the credit union instituted its Teacher Education Grant program in 2004. In 2019, the credit union donated \$15,000 to 50 local teachers benefiting 7,586 students and at mid-year 2020 had awarded \$7,500 to 25 teachers, impacting 3,471 students. Oregon State expanded a money and relationships class and increased the number of its popular “grab-and-go” resources to include a Mindful Money Management workbook. The credit union partnered with a statewide mental health care provider to create the workbook to help high school students understand

what it means to have true wellness, incorporating financial, mental and physical well being.

HONORABLE MENTION

BayPort Credit Union (VA) **BayPort CU Reaches Thousands Inside and Outside the Classroom**

BayPort CU’s goal is to reach and educate as many youth as possible. The credit union hosts 57 student-run

branches and also has strong ties with the Boys and Girls Clubs within its field of membership. Each year, BayPort seeks to engage club members during their summer program. In 2019, the credit union held a contest in which club members were invited to submit an application describing why their club deserved a “Financial Education Center” makeover. The contest drew more than 200 entries and the ten participating clubs each selected their best entry. The winning club received a makeover, financial education resources to supply the center, and the hands-on assistance of some 30 BayPort volunteers. Even in the pandemic-shortened 2019-2020 academic year, BayPort taught more than 10,000 students, using a variety of age-based engaging activities that included interactive instructional games such as Kahoot!, in-class lessons, and the Bite of Reality reality fair app. To encourage participation, BayPort utilizes the cell-phone-based app daily.



BayPort CU staff outside a Boys and Girls Club that received a *Financial Education Center* makeover

2020 DESJARDINS League Award

League

FIRST PLACE

Maine Credit Union League (ME) New Initiatives, New Delivery Channels Expand Education Efforts

The Maine Credit Union League and Maine's credit unions continued their extensive financial education efforts in the Pine Tree State and broadened their initiatives to include outreach to the immigrant community. In addition to hosting in-person and online Financial Fitness Fairs, the League produced a number of financial literacy videos, taught adult education courses, held a financial literacy conference, partnered with a number of organizations across the state, appeared on a weekly financial

literacy segment on Maine's ABC-affiliated television station, and submitted monthly financial education articles to a statewide newspaper for the immigrant community.

The League testified in support of legislation that mandated teaching personal finance in public schools, and the Governor signed the bill into law in 2019. A statewide Financial Literacy Conference was held to ensure credit unions knew how best to provide support to students and teachers following the passage of the mandate. The conference featured Maine State Senator Matthew Pouliot who was instrumental in passing the bill and who offered insight into how credit unions could assist schools in

providing financial education. A number of credit union employees were regular visitors in area schools, where they led lessons on personal finance, and some 4,500 students across the state attended an in-person Financial Fitness Fair. Prior to the remote learning precipitated by the pandemic, more schools than ever before were inquiring about hosting in-person Financial Fitness Fairs to help meet the state requirements. Now the popular budget simulation program is available online for at-home students. The League also led an initiative aimed at helping parents discuss finances with their at-home children during National Financial Literacy Month and National Credit Union Youth Month.

Recognizing the lack of education provided to the immigrant community, the League partnered with ProsperityME, a non-profit service organization helping immigrants and refugees build successful lives. The League provided support by creating content, speaking in classes, and leading a teller training course to help immigrants find jobs. In addition, financial articles are contributed monthly to Amjambo Africa, a free statewide newspaper for the immigrant community with a circulation of 15,000. The League also appears on WMTW, the state's ABC affiliated television station each Monday. The weekly segment reaches 10,000 viewers.



The Maine League further expanded their financial outreach efforts in 2020, reaching entirely new communities throughout the state.

2020 DESJARDINS Adult Financial Education Award

FIRST PLACE

\$50-250 MILLION IN ASSETS

Nova Credit Union (NC)

Nova CU Educates Most Vulnerable

In collaboration with two community partners, Nova CU designed and taught *Breaking Free from Money Traps*, targeted to underserved community residents who had been homeless. The course identified financial pitfalls, provided basic financial education, and helped participants begin the process of financial recovery.

The partnerships were formed following a Community Development Summit facilitated and hosted by the credit union that included representatives from state and local government, non-profit organizations and the community college as well as local elected officials. The Summit opened communication channels among a variety of groups, and served to identify federal funding opportunities and strategic partnerships that could address the challenges faced by vulnerable individuals

and families that no one group could do on its own.

To meet the critical need for adult financial literacy, Nova formed a task force with representatives of Cooperative Christian Ministries and Prosperity Unlimited, Inc., the organizations seeking to assist the homeless in becoming homeowners and procuring HUD loans, respectively. Through its shelter programs, CCM recruited the participants for the education program. Most were unbanked or underbanked and upon entering the program, were provided with a basic share account/membership by the credit union. A local church donated its facilities, served breakfast and provided daycare during the three-hour classes, held on Saturday mornings over an eight-week period.

In addition, each participant was assigned a financial counselor who provided one-on-one coaching. Participants were required to meet weekly with their coaches, either in person or via a telephone call, for

loan counseling, and to learn the steps needed to improve their credit, set goals, and create a savings plan. All of the credit union account managers and loan officers have completed the HERO: Community Development Certified Financial Counseling program. HERO stands for Helping Everyone Reach Opportunity.

SECOND PLACE

HomeTown Credit Union (MN)

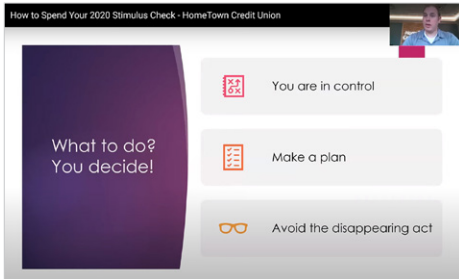
Virtual Learning Expands Outreach

When the pandemic shutdown its educational outreach efforts, HomeTown CU took its cue from local schools and pivoted to e-learning, launching a free Virtual Lunch and Learn series available to anyone to attend. The first session on April 3rd focused on strategies for coping with the loss of income and featured the credit union's community education coordinator and a career planner from a local firm. Subsequent sessions covered a variety of topics including credit scores, making wise use of the stimulus check, home buying and selling, COVID-19 related scams, low-cost family friendly activities, debt collection consumer rights, and more. The sessions were recorded and available for later viewing on the credit union's Web site and social media page, and also shared with the credit union's community partners. HomeTown has collaborated in a variety of ways with local organizations to provide financial literacy education including conducting reality fairs for adult English learners, presentations on U.S. money cus-



Recent graduates of Nova CU's *Breaking Free* financial education course.

2020 DESJARDINS Adult Financial Education Award



HomeTown CU shifted many of their financial education offerings to virtual formats in 2020.

toms, community education classes on financial topics, presentations to and coaching sessions for domestic abuse survivors, and more.

HONORABLE MENTION

**AmeriChoice Federal
Credit Union (PA)**

Round-the-Clock Sessions Improve Financial Literacy

AmeriChoice FCU not only helped the employees of thredUP become more financially literate, but also helped

the company reduce employee absenteeism and turnover. Many employees were living paycheck-to-paycheck and not prepared for emergencies. The debt or hardship would last for so long some felt they could save more money by staying home to avoid paying for childcare or car maintenance, plunging them deeper into a cycle of debt. The credit union created a personalized series of lessons for classes employees could attend during their lunch breaks. The classes are taught during each of the three shifts, necessitating a 2:30 am version. Topics covered include goal identification, budgeting, choosing the right financial institution, and the wise use of credit. Because the classes are held during the lunch break, the company does not lose any productivity. The sessions have proved popular, with

increasing numbers of employees signing up. AmeriChoice has received positive feedback from both the company, which has expressed interest to expanding programs to all its locations, and employees, including one who could now open a savings account for herself and for her children.

FIRST PLACE

\$250 MILLION-\$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

Education Credit Union (TX)

Education CU Lives Up to Its Name

True to its name, Education CU believes that knowledge is power and puts its tagline – “Learn more. Live more.” – into action in a number of ways. In 2019, ECU began providing financial education modules on its Web site. Forty-one courses are available to anyone who accesses its My Smart Money Lab tab. Additionally, two financial education blogs are posted to its Facebook page and Web site.

ECU organized and conducted an Emergency Savings contest that included an education component. Members were encouraged to open an emergency savings account and challenged to maintain a progressively higher average daily balance: \$250 in the first quarter, \$500 in the second, \$750 in the third, and \$1,000 in the fourth. At the end of each quarter, the names of those who accomplished the goals for that period were entered into a drawing to win \$250. Members who maintained a minimum daily balance of \$1,000 by the end of the fourth quarter and completed an educational requirement either online or by attending a financial educa-



AmeriChoice FCU partnered with thredUP, a local employee to offer financial education to their employees

2020 DESJARDINS Adult Financial Education Award



An Education CU employee leads a small group in one of their financial education courses.

tion workshop were entered into a drawing for \$1,000. The positive reinforcement paid off with winners each quarter and two members winning the \$1,000 prize. Sixty-one percent of members who began the contest ended the year with at least \$1,000 in their savings accounts.

The credit union partnered with Heal the City, a non-profit organization that provides health care to individuals without insurance. Health care providers donate their time to ensure patients receive the exams, lab work, and medications they would otherwise not access. To receive these medical services patients must attend wellness classes that include financial wellness education the credit union offers. Four times a year, financial educators teach workshops, and with the aid of a translator for non-English speaking patients, present the basic information needed for financial survival.

In 2017, with assistance from ECU, West Texas A&M, launched its

Buff\$mart Money Management Boot Camp. Students attend financial education classes and one-on-one coaching sessions. The credit union provided train-the-trainer instruction and teaches one third of the classes. The program has been so successful, growing from 69 program graduates to 321 in 2019, the credit union plans to donate \$50,000 to renovate an area that will be dedicated to adult financial ed-

ucation. The program will be re-named the Education Credit Union Buff\$mart Program.

The credit union also works with a number of other organizations to provide customized financial education.

SECOND PLACE

Service 1st Federal
Credit Union (PA)

Community Savings Challenge Benefits Consumers and Charities

Service 1st FCU's Community Savings Challenge benefited both its members and prospective members and local charities. Members and prospects were invited to meet with a Certified Credit Union Financial Counselor to complete a financial checkup including assistance with budgets, loan restructures, credit improvement and repair, and ways to save for their short and long-term needs. Help with insurance and retirement planning was also available. Following the checkup, a vote for one



Service 1st FCU partnered with a local market to provide a series of courses on food planning and financial education.

2020 DESJARDINS Adult Financial Education Award

of six charities that would share in a \$7,500 donation could be cast. At the conclusion of the campaign, the credit union had conducted 1,093 financial checkups saving members \$1,592,172 in interest expense, crushing its goal of saving them \$500,000. Based on the number of votes, each charity received a percentage of the \$7,500 donation. The credit union partnered with Weis Markets to provide THRIVE, a four-part series of sessions on food planning and preparation that also included information on financial topics including savings strategies, retirement planning, and life insurance. Service 1st also conducted a number of financial education workshops at local employers, a technical school, and at a Senior Expo.

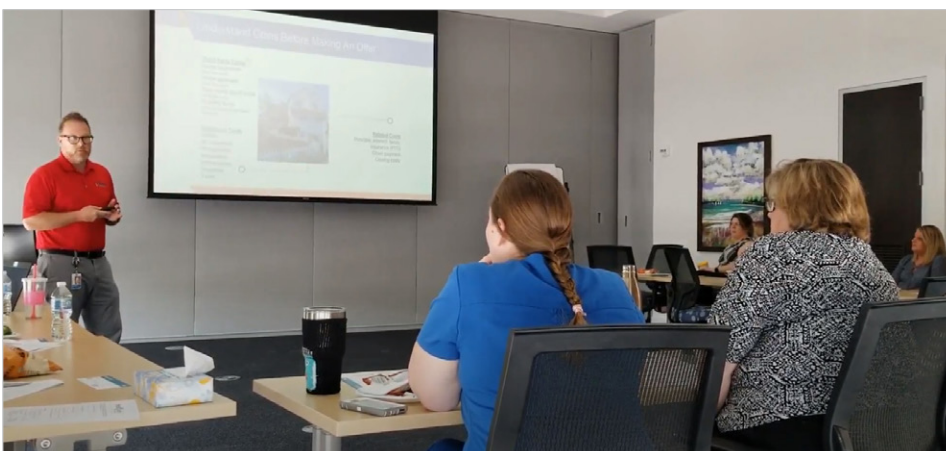
HONORABLE MENTION

Financial Center First Credit Union (IN)

Digital Strategies Supplement Traditional Education Delivery

Financial Center First CU has become well known for its financial literacy efforts in its market area, providing

information and education to many local businesses, non-profit organizations, and schools. Its partnership with the Consul de Mexico of Indiana allows the credit union to educate 2,000 immigrants annually. In 2019-2020, in addition to conducting 35 Wealth Builder seminars attended by 703 persons and resulting in 271 individual credit counseling sessions, the credit union relaunched its Wealth Builder Online with a mobile-first design and new content, reaching 2,384 learners. The online platform offers 24 videos, calculators, and quizzes on a variety of topics. The credit union introduced Carpe Dime, a personal finance podcast, attracting more than 900 listeners. In response to the pandemic, Financial Center First produced Wealth Builder Webinars that were accessed by more than 100 people, and released a series of credit building, budgeting and saving videos. As a result of its traditional efforts and digital strategies, under the leadership of its two full-time educators the credit union helped 6,154 people gain a firmer financial footing.



Financial Center First CU reached over 6,100 learners through their various financial education efforts in 2020.



Virginia CU expanded their financial education efforts in 2020 to reach incarcerated individuals.

FIRST PLACE

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN ASSETS

Virginia CU (VA)

Financial Literacy Helps Inmates Re-Enter Society

Virginia CU extends its education outreach to one of the audiences who need financial literacy the most: the incarcerated. In partnership with correctional facilities, the credit union offers Financial Freedom for Prisoners, a series of 44 classes to prepare inmates who will be transitioning back to society. The efforts not only enable individuals to gain a better understanding of financial issues, but also benefit society as a whole, as research shows financial education helps reduce the recidivism rate. The credit union focuses its prison outreach primarily at two facilities: the Federal Correctional Complex of Petersburg and the Chesterfield Women's Detention Center. Classes are presented on a variety of topics from budgeting to strategies to eliminate debt to the psychology of spending, but one of the most popular programs is "How

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to Read Your Credit Report.” Prior to the workshop, inmates are asked to order a copy of their reports and at the end of the session, the presenter provides attendees the opportunity to review their individual credit reports and to ask specific questions. Strategies to rebuild and re-establish credit once inmates transition back to society are also discussed. In 2019, the credit union reached 1,927 inmates at all of the facilities it served.

The credit union also provides financial education programs through free evening seminars at its locations, in workplaces, and in partnership with community organizations, colleges and universities.

To complement the in-person seminars, Virginia CU also offers robust online programming. Digital offerings include an online tool to determine a financial assessment score with follow-on customized modules designed to help improve participants’ financial well-being. Members also can access the BALANCE program, a resource for one-on-one financial coaching and education.

In total, these offerings reached 36,594 individuals, which includes 23,479 adults and 13,115 students.

Virginia CU also conducted five train-the-trainer sessions and taught 230 teachers who are using the credit union’s educational resources to educate thousands of students. The credit union also shared its expertise by presenting a webinar to financial educators

nationwide discussing best practices for teaching in a prison environment. The webinar was presented in partnership with the Association for Financial Counselors, Planners and Educators.

SECOND PLACE

GESA Credit Union (WA)

Outreach Targets Special Audiences

GESA CU extended its financial education outreach, offering seminars in each community in its service area, meeting the needs of its Hispanic and female members, and providing critical financial education/emergency relief in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019, the credit union hosted 35 seminars on a wide range of money management topics. GESA created six courses specific to the needs of its Hispanic and female members, holding a total of ten sessions in three market areas.

The credit union offered content in Spanish on credit scores, budgeting basics, budgeting for seasonal employment, and home ownership. Its Power of the Purse series provided women with the tools to set goals, and offered tips on budgeting, preparing for life’s unexpected changes, and raising a financially informed family. Webinars on dealing with the financial impact of the pandemic were viewed by more than 3,000 community members. The credit union regularly met with local employers to promote financial literacy awareness, providing each with a customized fact sheet regarding the financial stress employees face and tying it back to the impact on employees’ performance and focus, then worked with these employers to bring financial education on select topics to their employees.



GESA CU staff lead community members in a life simulation event.

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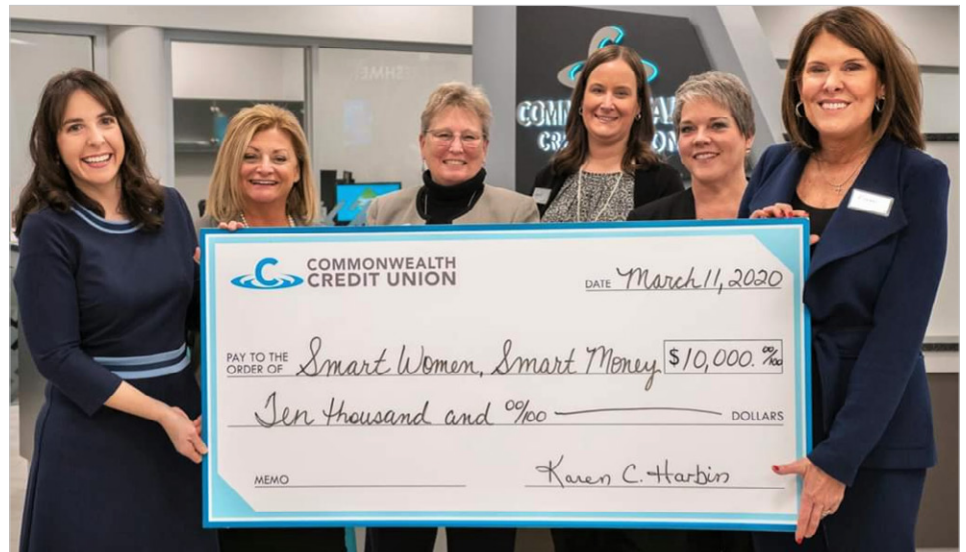
HONORABLE MENTION

Commonwealth Credit Union (KY) Partnership Helps College Students Graduate Debt Free

Commonwealth CU collaborated with Metropolitan College to assist students on their journey to graduate debt-free. Metropolitan College is a Kentucky partnership between UPS, The University of Louisville and Jefferson Community and Technical College. Participating students get their full-time undergraduate tuition paid to the University of Louisville or Jefferson Community & Technical College by working third shift at UPS Worldport. The collaboration helped more than 1,300 Metropolitan College students in 2019. Through what's known as the High Five program, the credit union connects students with learning in three specific ways. First, incoming students are required to complete an online financial basics course prior to finalizing their

agreement with the College. Online learning is provided not only at this time, but continues to be available so students can revisit topics as needed, use the tools, and explore more advanced material at their leisure. The next teaching touch point is the connection with a High Five Wealth Ambassador. Students arrange appointments to meet one-on-one

with a Commonwealth Financial Services Representative specially trained to assist participants with creating budgets and goals. The third component is ongoing education that takes place through additional Wealth Ambassador meetings, orientation presentations, workshops, and conversations during success celebrations.



Commonwealth CU present a check to the Smart Women, Smart Money conference initiative, which equip women from all backgrounds with various financial tools.