

SOUTH CAROLINA



Statistics

- ▶ **4,998 credit union members and 800 nonmembers received 3,280 hours of formal financial counseling**
- ▶ **12,700 credit union members received 6,224 hours of information financial advice**
- ▶ **160 members entered a debt management plan**
- ▶ **87 members established a workout option for a mortgage**
- ▶ **4,170 adults participated in 191 workshops or seminars**
- ▶ **Credit unions partner with schools and nonprofit organizations to provide financial education and have spent over \$500,000 on financial education programs**
- ▶ **22,023 students participated in 548 classroom presentations – These numbers are gleaned from the NCUF Financial Education Inventory Survey and the NYIB.**



Protectors of the Palmetto State consumer, South Carolina's credit unions are committed to personal financial strength as a shared purpose and the long-term solution for various economic liabilities. Their success in helping people build necessary skills is aided by a tradition of support for each other and adaptability toward new and unique approaches.

A primary motivator is the ongoing presence of payday and predatory lenders in the state. In 2003, credit unions' participation in a consumer protection coalition drew legislator attention to the NEFE High School Financial Planning Program (HSFPP) and in turn brought about the first state law requiring financial education in public schools. That mandate was expanded and clarified in 2005 to specify no less than thirteen fundamentals—most of them part of the NEFE HSFPP.

The not-for-profits also worked hand-in-hand with the cooperative extension service (CES) to promote the NEFE HSFPP to schools and develop a unique Newspaper in Education (NIE) series that reached into classrooms and homes. Statewide, hundreds of schools have placed annual total orders averaging more than 17,000 student guides. Credit unions have actively kept the comprehensive, free program near the top of lists of available material without limiting educator, student, or consumer choices.

Partnerships like the one with Clemson Cooperative Extension for NIE and NEFE are critical to effectiveness. Credit unions also have worked with: the SC Bar to share the legal aspects of consumer finance; with CES, SC Economics, and the SC Department of Education (SCDE) to educate teachers and administrators; and with SCDE to match available material to state standards. In 2005, Palmetto State credit unions joined like-minded business and public leaders to form the South Carolina Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy (SC Jump\$tart), continuing today to support SC Jump\$tart's educator development and micro-grant funding of worthy financial education programs in schools and communities.

Achievements have been plentiful. South Carolina credit unions have regularly garnered CUNA Desjardins Financial Education Awards, as did SC Senator Greg Gregory for his legislative leadership. Through presentation of annual awards they have valued the contributions of educators and their own advocates who have reached out to hundreds of young people and adults. They continue to look for insight among each other not only within the state but beyond it through the National Youth Involvement Board network, in which South Carolina has been among the top ten states in financial education presentations given and students reached.

As in daily work, each South Carolina credit union's strategy reflects its uniqueness and its local community need, and each most closely fits with the rest toward a financially strong future for the Palmetto State.

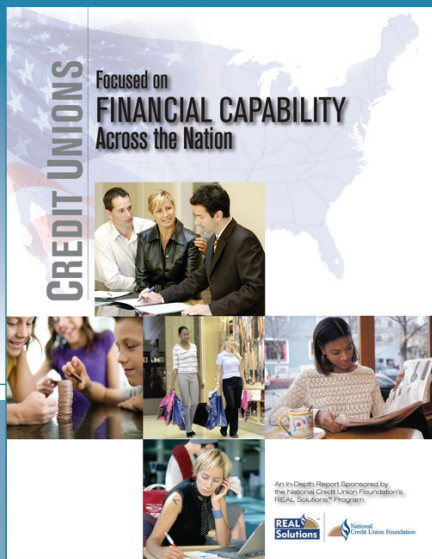
Credit Union Members With Access to Financial Counseling (by topic)

11% of South Carolina consumers and 37% all South Carolina credit union members have access to savings accumulation and money management counseling through a South Carolina credit union.



Base is South Carolina credit unions (representing 37% of all credit union memberships in South Carolina)

Source: 2011 Credit Union Member Financial Education Inventory published by NCUF's REAL Solutions™ Program



About Credit Unions

- ▶ Credit unions are not-for-profit financial institutions that adhere to cooperative principles.
- ▶ As of December 2010, 92.6 million U.S. consumers were member owners of 7,605 credit unions across the country.
- ▶ Earnings are returned to members in the form of lower loan rates, higher interest on deposits, and lower fees.
- ▶ Credit unions serve members who have a common bond such as employment, association membership, or residence in a particular geographic area.
- ▶ Every credit union is governed by a board of directors, elected by and from the credit union's membership. Board members serve voluntarily.
- ▶ Congress exempts credit unions from federal income taxes but credit unions are subject to payroll, sales and property taxes.
- ▶ Credit unions are democratically owned and controlled institutions with a "people helping people" philosophy. Each credit union member has equal ownership and one vote.
- ▶ Credit unions assist members in becoming better-educated consumers of financial services.
- ▶ Credit unions are a small but significant presence in the financial services industry. Credit unions hold approximately 6.7% of household financial assets.

Source: Credit Union National Association, Inc.

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ACROSS THE NATION

In an effort to capture the depth and breadth of existing financial capability programs, the National Credit Union Foundation (NCUF) and its REAL Solutions™ program conducted a comprehensive national study of credit-union provided member and consumer financial education and counseling. The data derived from this study quantifies the extent to which credit unions are providing opportunities for consumers to advance their financial knowledge and decision-making skills.

The data on which this report is based was collected through an online survey of U.S. credit unions. *Credit Unions: Focused on Financial Capability Across the Nation* features an analysis of information submitted by 576 credit unions of all sizes from 45 states. These credit unions represent 8% of all U.S. credit unions, and 27% of all U.S. credit union memberships as of December 2010.

In 2010, credit unions invested millions of dollars to provide financial education and counseling programs that touched millions of lives:

- ▶ **1.6 million** consumers received financial counseling and/or advice through a credit union.
- ▶ Credit union representatives presented more than **24,000** educational sessions to over **600,000** students in classrooms across the nation.
- ▶ **111,500** student members had **\$34 million** on deposit at **1,400** in-school credit union branches that encourage savings and connect financial education with financial access.
- ▶ **1.2 million** members visited or used a credit union online educational tool, resource and/or course and generated tens of millions of page views.
- ▶ **85,000** teens and young adults participated in **1,200** experiential learning events organized or provided by credit unions. Experiential learning provides participants with a taste of the real financial world in a safe and controlled environment.
- ▶ Between **19 and 24 million** credit union members have access to education and/or counseling that deals with the five individual Financial Literacy and Education Commission (FLEC) core concept categories. Credit union financial education/counseling content is designed to develop proficiencies regarding spending, saving/investing, borrowing, protecting, and earning/income.
- ▶ Credit unions invested **\$140 million** during 2010 toward improving the financial capability of members and consumers in general. Whether it be through grants, human resources or budgeted financial resources, credit unions invest heavily in member and consumer financial education/counseling.

The National Credit Union Foundation believes that access to financial products and services should always be accompanied by educational opportunities. In particular, NCUF encourages behavior change through experiential learning and one-on-one counseling/advice. This link between education and impending opportunities to make financial decisions enables people to take action based on newly gained knowledge, resulting in more financially capable and secure consumers.

Credit Unions: Focused on Financial Capability Across the Nation represents one of several ongoing projects to assist credit unions with educational program development, measurement, and implementation. In the coming years, NCUF and REAL Solutions™ will continue to gather and publish data about credit union provision of financial education/counseling.

To learn more about the **National Credit Union Foundation** and REAL Solutions™, please visit www.ncuf.coop. A copy of the full report, and individual state supplements can be found at the **REAL Solutions™ Impact Center** at www.realsolutions.coop.

