

WEST VIRGINIA



"These three credit unions are a representation of the impact our West Virginia credit unions are having in their communities to advance financial literacy,"

—Ken Watts, CEO of the league.

Credit unions in West Virginia are working to help members through these difficult economic times and to help students prepare for futures as responsible and money-savvy adults. The following are three examples of how credit unions are accomplishing these actions.

Eastern Panhandle Credit Union is a \$14 million credit union serving a tri-county area in eastern West Virginia. Charlene Gaither, CEO, was inspired by other credit unions with high school branches and wanted to help her own student community. In 2007, the credit union opened a branch in Hedgesville High School. The branch is located in the school's cafeteria and is open two mornings a week and during lunch hours twice a week.

Student tellers, under the supervision of Tina Sheppard, Member Services Manager, open accounts, take deposits, help with withdrawals and provide other services to their peers. As a result of the on-site branch, over 200 students have opened 350 different accounts and hold over \$12,000 in deposits. A slightly higher interest rate is paid to students for savings and CD accounts. "It's a learning experience for all of us," says Gaither. "A teller was explaining CDs to a student, who asked if the teller was talking about some sort of music CD."

Clarksburg Area Postal Employees (CAPE) Credit Union is \$11 million in assets. CEO Melinda Woodyard is a graduate of CUNA's Management School where she heard about CUNA's Mad City Money program, a budgeting simulation program for teens. "It's sort of a taste of reality, as students take on adult roles for a couple of hours and have to budget for expenses," explains Woodyard. The credit union serves only postal employees in the area, but wanted to do its part to educate youth.

This is the fourth year CAPE has been providing the simulation workshop. What started out with students from business classes in one high school has evolved to whole senior classes in four different schools. "The response to the program has been excellent," says Woodyard. "Schools hear about it from other schools and want to participate, as well, CAPE is next going to try using the simulation program to help at-risk adults learn budgeting skills."

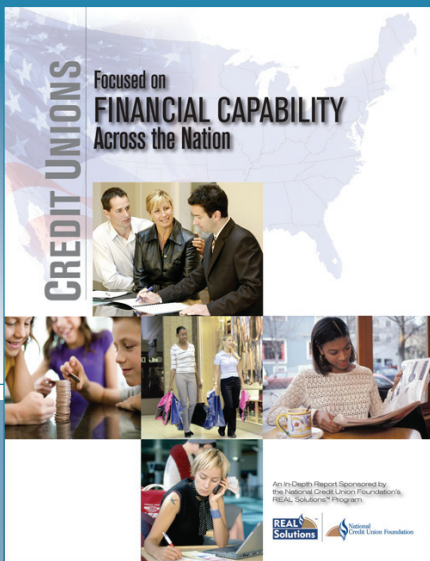
West Virginia Central Credit Union (WVCCU) is over \$90 million in assets. The credit union in conjunction with Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS) offer classes twice a year to members and non-members, entitled "Credit Where Credit is Due," to help people understand credit and how to better manage it. The eight-session classes are offered every Tuesday and Thursday during the months of February and September from 5:45 pm to 8 pm, with dinner provided by WVCCU. Whereas most of the emphasis of the course is helping people understand and improve credit, a recent addition to the program is a session on budgeting.

WVCCU began offering the classes in the late 1990s. Mark Greenlees, VP of Lending took over the program in 2003 and has watched participation grow. "We generally get good participation," says Greenlees. "Sometimes as many as 40 or 50 people attend per class." The instruction books for the classes are provided free to participants by CCCS. Credit union employees and CCCS staff teach the classes. The classes are free and a test is administered by CCCS at the end of the course. People who pass the test can have their scores reported to the credit bureaus which can help raise their credit scores.

"We had one woman who had a credit score of 798," reports Greenlees. "But she wanted a score over 800, so she took the course. Another woman had several credit problems and a score in the 500s. She took the course six years ago and steadily worked her way through each credit issue. Today, she has a score over 700."

The West Virginia Credit Union League is proud of the efforts of all its credit unions to help youth and adults learn responsible money management skills.





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.

For more information, contact:
 Lois Kitsch, CUDE & National Program Director
 National Credit Union Foundation
 5710 Mineral Point Road
 Madison, WI 53705
 Phone: 407.616.2409
lkitsch@ncuf.coop

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.

