

## **DORA MAXWELL**

### **Pen Air Federal Credit Union Pen Air Charity Golf Tournament**

Pen Air Federal Credit Union hosted a Charitable Golf Tournament in March 2015 to benefit the local Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS). The CU has hosted this golf tournament for over 15 years. The NMCRS Director challenges the Credit Union each year to raise at least \$25,000 because that amount will help maintain the no-interest lending program, and the Director of the NMCRS could gain matching grant money that would sustain the operations side and other educational/good-will work of the local office. Total funds raised for the past 15 years are over \$400,000.

The NMCRS is a non-profit organization that administers confidential, no-interest loans up to \$1,000.00 per family to help with unexpected emergencies. Depending on the emergency or situation, the military family may be given a grant – which would not have to be paid back. Because the NMCRS is a government agency, the NMCRS is not allowed to do its own fundraising so it relies on government grants and private assistance. But, Pen Air FCU is always there!

If an active duty military personnel overseas fighting for our freedom knows that his family is being taken care of in cases of payroll delays or emergencies, then that service person can better focus at his or her duties. This makes the roll of the NMCRS very important in the Credit Union's eyes.

It is important for Pen Air to maintain this community/military good-will because Pen Air Federal Credit Union is a multi-SEG based credit union serving well over 1,100 different select employee groups (SEGs). Our core field of membership before going multi-SEG included the Civil Service and Military on our military bases and we can never forget our roots. Pen Air FCU maintains a strong relationship with Naval Air Station Pensacola, and they know we will respond to their needs.

### **New Horizons Credit Union People Helping People**

New Horizons Credit Union has been the main sponsor of the Hi-Q Academic Competition in Mobile, AL since 1986. The Hi-Q program is the oldest continuing academic quiz competition in the US, and New Horizons has been the sole sponsor for this competition since it expanded to Alabama in 1986. We have partnered with the Mobile County Public School System because we share in the belief that Hi-Q is a very important part of quality education. We strongly believe that the Hi-Q competition encourages academic achievement, initiative, and good sportsmanship.

Another project that New Horizons is proudly a part of is the Vita Tax Program through United Way. Each year our West Mobile office donates office space and access to our equipment throughout the duration of the tax season. This program allows for tax payers under a particular income to have their taxes electronically taken care of at no

charge by a certified preparer through United Way. Those that sign up for this service do not have to be members of our credit union; this is simply one of the ways we give back to our community. For 2015, NHCU volunteered two offices for two preparers to work out of. They processed a total of 166 returns with a total of \$174,728 in refunds. For 2016, New Horizons donated even more space and days per week for the processors to work, resulting in 271 returns processed with a total of over \$260,000 in refunds. New Horizons Credit Union also proudly awards six \$1,000 scholarships each year to students from schools in and around the communities we serve. We have a scholarship committee that reviews each application and chooses awardees based on several factors, with one of the main focuses being community service.

## **First Commerce Credit Union Junior Achievement**

### **First Commerce Credit Union**

As a community credit union, First Commerce participates in a multitude of outreach initiatives. One in which we have the longest standing relationship is Junior Achievement (JA). JA of the Big Bend helps young people connect with relevant learning and the importance of staying in school, and sparks students to develop competitive skills and confidence. Their success bolsters the local workforce and contributes to economic growth. First Commerce believes so strongly in JA that, after 9 years of providing at least 12 volunteers to teach, we fully funded the expansion of the program into the lower schools in 2012. In 2015, for the 12<sup>th</sup> year in a row, 12 team members including at least one senior manager which is often our CEO devoted their time and resources to volunteering in classrooms across the county to teach students in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

By inspiring personal economic success, Junior Achievement's (JA) vision is for students to become prepared workers and leaders who provide higher standards of living for themselves and for their communities.

According to research conducted by Junior Achievement USA, 9 out of 10 teachers believe experiential learning is effective in getting students interested in higher education and careers. Across the board, JA students report more confidence in their ability to be prepared for the future after participating in JA. Many times the standard classroom curriculum doesn't produce experiential learning and hands-on activities that students can directly relate to. JA volunteer teachers are able to share their real-life experiences from the workforce, apply those experiences to the hands-on activities, and ultimately give students a new perspective of being part of the community and how their choices impact that community. JA volunteers help young people make a connection between what they are learning in school and what they will need to succeed in work and life. Students put these lessons into action and learn the value of work-readiness, financial stability and how to apply entrepreneurial thinking to the workplace. First Commerce's longtime support on many levels through money and time, as well as fundraising, has been key to the success, expansion, and sustainability of JA.

## **Louise Herring**

### **Guardians Credit Union Credit/Savings Builder Loan Program**

In July 2015, the credit union began offering a Credit/Savings Builder Loan. The Credit/Savings Builder loan is designed to help members with no credit, little credit or unfavorable credit. The loan is used to build or rebuild a credit score. Initially, several members took advantage of the loan and because of that interest, it is now offered as one of loan products available to any of our members.

The Credit Union decided to pursue this project because of member's requests. Several members made requests regarding a program like a secured credit card so that younger members or people with no credit score or activity could begin to establish credit. The credit union also had members who were planning for the future and would like to purchase their first home. Saving money can be difficult when certain situations arise. The credit and savings builder also goes up to \$10,000 so that if members need to save for a down payment, this is a convenient way for them to do so. As the credit union researched our market around us, we also wanted to provide an affordable option for our members. Other institutions offered similar programs with interest rates averaging between 13-15%. The credit union offers our Credit/Savings Builder Loan at only 4%. Truly, a credit union advantage that we are proud to offer our members.

The Credit/Savings Builder Loan program was designed with members in mind. The credit union received feedback from members regarding products they wanted and we listened. Guardians Credit Union wanted to better serve our underserved or potential members. Our members and future members needed an affordable option so that they do not have to utilize check-cashing or title loan businesses for their primary banking or lending solutions.

### **First Commerce Federal Credit Union PIP: Process Improvement Plan**

Commerce Credit Union implemented a Process Improvement Program (known internally by the catchy phrase "PIP") as a means to encourage team members to communicate ideas for improving the existing processes or identifying new ones that needed to be created. We believe employees are best able to identify ways that existing exceptional service could be improved even further. They are also the ones who would run into consistent issues that caused service breaks and might be inclined to identify ways around common issues that led to breaks. And beyond that, any employee might have an idea for a new product or service that could take the credit union into innovative territory. In order to capture these ideas, employees needed to have a process for submitting ideas and a means for those ideas to be filtered, reviewed and enacted.

A committee of five employees in an emerging leaders program was tasked with developing a process for and training other team members on the process. The committee selected computer CRM software that could be accessed by all employees as the method to submit process improvement plan suggestions. This software also houses the previously implemented service recovery communication tool, which has been modified to allow for team members to tack on PIP suggestions based on service recoveries. They worked with the “programmer” to develop a new Service event, as well as modify the existing Service Recovery Service event, to ask a series of prompts to ensure the committee had the requisite information to address the issue. One especially important prompt was to ask team members how they would solve the problem, often resulting in better solutions and ownership of the process throughout the organization.

The PIP Committee meets on a biweekly basis to review entries and make decisions on which suggestions are feasible to execute and which are not. Some are easy fixes and others help provide senior management with strategic decisions on which to focus. An important component of the program is that all decisions are communicated to the employee who made the suggestion so that they know suggestions aren't falling into a void. Suggestions to be enacted are then assigned to the appropriate Subject Matter Expert team members. The responsibility of executing the idea does not fall on the team member who originally suggested it, but the person who is empowered to make it happen. This removes a potential barrier as we had seen in a previous internal ideas program and opens up a willingness to participate in the program.

### **CFE Federal Credit Union CFE Boone High School Financial Fitness Tournament**

June 2016, students at the "student-operated" Boone High School Branch of CFE Federal Credit Union participated in a financial fitness tournament hosted by the League of Southeast Credit Unions ("LSCU"). The students of Boone High School captured first place in the tournament over 11 other teams from Florida and Alabama.

CFE has a long standing commitment toward educating its members on the merits of financial fitness and stability, and particularly feels that youth need to be reached early with regards to financial training and fitness in order to successfully meet their obligations in the future. As a result, CFE has opened 6 student run branches at area high schools with hopes of promoting financial education to students, as well as introducing them to "real world" experiences in the workplace. This tournament fit very well with CFE's ongoing emphasis on providing and enhancing financial education to high school students.

Several (3) students at CFE's student run Boone High School branch participated and won the LSCU Financial Fitness Tournament that brought together 11 teams of students throughout Florida and Alabama to compete in a financial awareness and education tournament. Through work at the Boone High School branch and coaching by CFE's support staff, these students excelled in the tournament and ultimately won the competition. CFE's participation is highlighted and supported by the students' real life

experiences gained while working at the high school branch and the excellent partnership between Boone High School, CFE, and the students.

**Desjardins Youth Award  
Tallahassee-Leon FCU  
Tallahassee-Leon Treasure Hackers!**

At TLFCU, we are constantly looking for ways to involve our young members and youth from the community in financial education! This year we took things to new levels by conducting our 5<sup>th</sup> annual overnight financial education summer camp, conducting numerous reality fairs, partnering with local law enforcement in our county schools, and wait for it...our first ever Hackathon Weekend! Our Hackathon Weekend took teens out of their element and submersed them in the innovation process to provide an experiential learning environment that resulted in numerous recommendations from the group as to how to get their peers involved and excited about financial education! Many of our initiatives are co-chaired by folks from our Youth Advisory Council – a group of youth members chartered in 2014 that have ‘graduated’ from at least one of programs! As our President/CEO Lisa Brown always says, "What better way to learn than by teaching?"

Florida, like other states, does not require children graduate from high school with any financial literacy training. In addition, Tallahassee is a college town making for an inordinate amount of young adults in our community. We see members walk in the door with tens of thousands in student loan debt, poor credit, no savings plans, and even lack of job skills. We feel it is our obligation to provide financial education in our community at a young age to assist in mitigating these types of issues for the next generation. In addition to our efforts all year long, we hosted our fifth annual MBA Summer Camp, or “Mini Billionaire’s Academy” this summer. Organized and conducted by senior managers from TLFCU, the sleepover camp uses interactive activities to teach children about the benefits of understanding money and how to make good financial decisions. The grand finale of the camp utilizes the Mad City Money program to walk the participants through a day in the life of an adult – encouraging them to make decisions that build towards the financial goals they have created for themselves.

**Desjardins Youth Award  
VyStar Credit Union  
VyStar High School Credit Union Branch Program**

Over a decade ago, VyStar began offering targeted financial literacy programs designed specifically for high school students. Our age-appropriate programs focus on establishing a firm financial foundation, at an early age, to help teenagers avoid many of the crippling financial issues adults and families struggle with today. VyStar’s flagship youth literacy program is our High School Credit Union Branch program. This program

was introduced over 10 years ago and has brought financial literacy and the credit union experience to thousands of high school students in nine different high schools, soon to be 11.

VyStar's High School Branch program is unique because the branches are completely run by the students. Each branch is open an average of 60 to 90 minutes per day, five days a week. While the existing nine high school branches have approximately \$1.2 million on deposit and 2,550+ members, it is not VyStar's intent to increase deposits or membership with this program. The objective is to teach students the importance of money. And, through this program, VyStar is helping students with one of life's most formidable concepts: personal financial accountability. Prior to each school year, student managers—referred to as student interns—are selected for each of the high school branches. These student interns are trained and prepared by VyStar staff over the summer to serve when the new school year starts. There were 108 student interns trained and serving the nine high school branches in the 2015/2016 school year. There are 132 student interns in training this summer in preparation for the upcoming 2016/2017 school year within 11 high school branch locations. The students running these branches also develop, and benefit from, the skills needed to enter the professional arena right out of high school. Many of the students are able to secure part-time and/or full-time employment after graduation and during college. In fact, VyStar has employed many of the students participating in this program after graduating from high school.

#### Additional Youth Financial Literacy Programs

Reality Fairs - In addition to the High School Credit Union Branch program, VyStar expanded its financial literacy initiatives to include the "On My Own Reality Fair" program. VyStar partnered with the University of Florida Extension office and jointly created an "On My Own Reality Fair" kit and introduced it to the high school branch program. It was so popular that VyStar introduced its "On My Own Reality Fair" to numerous other high schools in Northeast Florida outside the existing high school credit union branch program. To date, VyStar has reached more than 10,000 students with this program. The "On My Own" Reality Fair is a hands-on, real-life simulation that gives young people the opportunity to experience their financial future in a fun and exciting way. Students are encouraged to make healthy and wise lifestyle choices, similar to the choices adults must make on a daily basis.

#### **Desjardins Adult Award First Commerce Credit Union FCCU Foundation**

Throughout our history, First Commerce has empowered our members and community through financial literacy. To celebrate our 75th anniversary in 2015, we launched the FCCU Foundation as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to take these efforts to the next level.

In our first major initiative, we launched a series of **SmartMoney** workshops, targeting area college students. Heading into the fall semester to begin our second year, we are teaching regularly at nearly every major institution of higher learning in our 23-county field of membership. Heading into a new market, we have an agreement to start teaching at another university. These workshops came on the heels of launching our latest extension of programs to help younger generations develop healthy financial habits, our national award-winning MyWay Checking program for 18-29 year olds, which includes educational features. It also coincided with the opening of our newest location in CollegeTown, near 3 major colleges/universities.

In early strategic planning for our new FCCU Foundation, we identified that people attending college, senior citizens; those in poverty; or people in transition due to loss of job, divorce, death in the family are many times the groups affected most by poor financial planning and bad decisions.

As we slowly ramp up the Foundation with the help of existing credit union resources, the board decided to initially focus on delivering financial education to college students. In the Foundation's first major initiative, we started a series of **SmartMoney** workshops, targeting college students in our area and designed to teach young adults about the importance of sound financial habits. We first approached Tallahassee Community College with the idea of providing regular workshops on campus. This idea was immediately embraced as filling a gap in preparing students with "life skills." Even more, one executive commented that parents often call the financial aid office at the beginning of the semester to find out about disbursement dates because they have rent and other bills due. This points to a problem that many ***parents are living off of students' financial aid.***

Leveraging material from educational partner Balance, we "punched up" the titles of the courses to make them more fun for the college audience.

A schedule of monthly workshops to be held at TCC's Student Union was established. To make them more approachable and relatable, workshops are taught by credit union professionals from the millennial generation. Upcoming events are advertised in college communications including their websites and social media, flyers, and yard signs; as well as First Commerce's website, social media and emails. Instructors make the workshops fun and interactive, with free food & beverages, drawings, prizes, and giveaways. A financial services officer is on hand before and after the workshops for one-on-one conversations.