



Illinois
Credit Union Foundation

Giving Back

Official Newsletter of the Illinois Credit Union Foundation

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ICUF Enhanced FiCEP 2026 – Registration Open, Deadline February 27

The ICU Foundation's popular Enhanced FiCEP Program returns in 2026! It's the perfect time to earn your designation as a Credit Union Certified Financial Counselor (CCUFC). The Enhanced FiCEP Program includes recorded webinars, study guides and an exam prep session. The registration fee charged by America's Credit Unions for the materials will be \$484. There is no additional cost for credit unions who purchased the training bundle from America's Credit Unions. **Need to recertify?** We've got you covered with a discounted registration fee. [FiCEP 2026 Information & Registration online](#)

2026 International Women's Day Celebration & ISS Meeting (3/6) – Register Now!

International Women's Day takes place annually on March 8. The theme for this year is #GivetoGain. [Click Here](#) for more information about IWD2065. Be sure to mark your calendar for a virtual Illinois Sister Society Meeting on Friday, March 6, 2026 @ 10:00 –11:00 am. Registration coming soon!

2026 ICUF Exploring Why Workshop – March 25, 2026 – Register Now!

The ICU Foundation will hold an Exploring Why Workshop on March 25, 2026 (the day prior to the ICUL Peer Networking Event). Registration will open in early 2025 with a fee of \$100 per person.

CU FinHealth – September 22-24, 2026 – Save the Date

CU FinHealth, co-hosted by the ICU Foundation, is set for September 22-24 in Denver, CO. This hands-on conference is designed to help you take actionable steps on your financial health journey—whether you're just starting or looking to build on existing efforts. It focuses on how credit unions are driving financial health across their organizations, measuring success, addressing key issues, and taking impactful actions to improve financial well-being for employees, members, and communities.

Bite of Reality App – Spanish Version Live

The ICU Foundation is thrilled to announce the Bite of Reality App is now available in English and Spanish. Users simply choose their preferred language when launching the program. Paired with the Spanish version of the merchant booth materials, the program is now accessible for a wider audience. Contact the ICU Foundation with questions.

Interact With Peers

- **ICUL Financial Education Peer Group** – The Illinois Credit Union League offers a Communities feature on its website which enables peer group members to ask questions and share information with one another. [Check it out today!](#)
- **Credit Union Foundations Network** – A networking group for credit union leaders that are managing, leading, or looking to launch a grant-making foundation in association with their credit union. CUs from throughout the country gather for monthly virtual meetings to discuss their work. [Join their LinkedIn Group here.](#)
- **Financial Well-Being Connection** – A networking group for financial well-being practitioners, especially coaches, counselors, and trainers. CUs from throughout the country gather for monthly virtual meetings to discuss their work. Register for their meetings [Register for the meetings here.](#) [Join their LinkedIn Group here.](#)

2026 CUFEN Conference – Save the Date

The Credit Union Financial Education Network (CUFEN) will host its annual conference July 26-29, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas. Registration will open next year. CUFEN, formerly known as the National Youth Involvement Board, expanded its mission and purpose from youth financial education to reaching all ages with financial education. In addition to their annual conference, the group also collects data regarding the number of financial education presentations conducted by credit unions.

REMINDERS

ICUF Scholarships & Grants

The ICU Foundation offers Grants of up to \$10,000 to cover a wide variety of projects to help credit unions grow and expand their services. ICU Foundation Scholarships can be used for a wide variety of education programs. All ICUL-affiliated CUs are eligible, and applications are accepted year-round. We encourage you to apply early in the year since funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. [Check out the scholarship & grant details online.](#)

Reality Fair Programs

Teen Reality Fairs teach students how to manage money and the importance of a budget or spending plan. The Bite of Reality program and resources, offered by the ICU Foundation at no cost to credit unions, is available in a variety of formats (app-based, computer-accessible, and paper packets). **Retirement Reality Fairs** are similar to Teen Fairs except the participants can use their real-life situations instead of pretend scenarios when planning for the future. The Retire on Track program and resources are provided by the ICU Foundation at no cost to credit unions. [Learn about Reality Fairs & Access FREE Resources](#)

Financial Education in Other Languages & CU Compliance

ICUL's Director of Compliance, Shannon Basile, recently shared a blog about what credit unions need to consider when offering financial education information (presentations or materials) in other languages. You'll need to login to the ICUL website to access the [compliance blog post](#).

ICUF Commemorative Awards

The ICU Foundation's Commemorative Program is a moving way to acknowledge a special person or credit union, while also supporting the credit union movement. Honor an individual's memory, recognize a colleague's professional accomplishments or celebrate your credit union's milestones. [Learn more and check out the video highlighting 2025 awards.](#)

2026 Events & Important Dates

February 27	ICUF Enhanced FiCEP Registration Deadline for April 6 start date <i>Financial Counseling Certification Program</i>
March 6	Illinois Sister Society Virtual Meeting <i>Join us to celebrate International Women's Day</i>
March 25	ICUF Exploring Why Workshop (Naperville) <i>Calling all Credit Union Enthusiasts – join us for a fantastic 1-Day Workshop to dig into principles and philosophy!</i>
September 2	Golf Outing – Bliss Creek Golf Course (Sugar Grove) <i>Get together with us for a fun-filled golf scramble!</i>
September 22-24	CU FinHealth (Denver) <i>Join us for the premier conference for credit union financial health practitioners</i>
October 23	Annual Raffle Drawing – Hilton Chicago & Towers <i>Live drawing is held in the Exhibit Hall</i>
November 17	ICUF Reality Fair Workshop (Springfield) <i>Learn how to incorporate experiential learning into your financial education programs</i>
January 1 to December 31	Foundation's Annual Support Campaign <i>Our most important fundraiser which provides unrestricted support to the Foundation – donations accepted year-round</i>

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