



# Giving Back

Official Newsletter of the Illinois Credit Union Foundation

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## ICUF Annual Support Campaign Raises \$178,000+

The ICU Foundation raised more than \$170,000 for its 2025 Annual Support Campaign. Thank you to generous donations from our wonderful credit unions and chapters:

1st Gateway CU	Earthmover CU	Northwest Community CU
1st MidAmerica CU	Education Personnel FCU	Northwest Illinois Chapter
2 Rivers Area CU	Egyptian Chapter	NuMark CU
77th St Depot FCU	Elite Community CU	Oak Lawn Municipal ECU
Abbott Laboratories ECU	Evanston Firemans CU	Ottawa Hiway CU
Abri CU	Evergreen Park Schools FCU	Park Manor Church CU
Access CU	Fellowship Baptist Church CU	Partnership Financial CU
Advantage One CU	Fieldstone CU	Peoria City ECU
Alloya Corporate FCU	Financial Partners CU	Peoria Fire Fighters CU
Altonized FCU	Financial Plus CU	Peoria Hiway CU
ANCO Community CU	First Northern CU	Peoria Postal ECU
Archer Heights CU	Gale CU	Planites CU
Area Educational CU	Galesburg Burlington CU	Reavis Stickney CU
ASH ECU	Gas & Electric CU	Revity CU
Aurora Policemen CU	Generations CU	Riverside Community CU
Aurora Postal ECU	Great Lakes CU	Rock Valley CU
BCU	Greater Chicagoland Chapter	Salem School System CU
BEA CU	Harvard Community CU	Scott CU
Berean CU	Healthcare Associates CU	Select Employees CU
Blackhawk Area CU	Heartland CU	Selfreliance FCU
Blaw Knox CU	Heights Auto Workers CU	Service Plus CU
Bloomington Municipal CU	Hershey Robinson ECU	Sherwin Williams CU
Catholic & Community CU	IH Mississippi Valley CU	Shiloh Englewood FCU
CEFCU	Illinois Educators CU	SIU CU
Central CU of IL	Illinois Valley CU	SIUE CU
Central Illinois CU	Imperial CU	South Shop FCU
Chicago Avenue Garage FCU	Israel Methcomm FCU	South Side Community FCU
Chicago Metro Chapter	Kankakee Valley Chapter	Southern Burnett Chapter
Chicago Post Office ECU	Kaskaskia Valley Community CU	Springfield City ECU
Chicago's Bravest CU	KONE ECU	St Gregory Parish CU
Community Plus FCU	Landmark CU	St Helena Parish CU
Community Trust CU	LinXus CU	Staley CU
Consumers CU	Loyola University EFCU	State Farm FCU
Cooperative Choice Network CU	Members First Community CU	Streator Community CU
Cornerstone CU	Midwest Coalition of Labor CU	Streator Onized CU
Corporate America Family CU	Midwest Members CU	Taylorville Community CU
Corporate Central CU	Moline Municipal CU	Tee Pak CU
Credit Union 1	MWRD ECU	The Credit Union For All
CTA 74th St Depot FCU	New Century FCU	United Community CU
Decatur Earthmover CU	NICE FCU	United Equity CU
Decatur Postal CU	Northern Illinois University EFCU	Urbana Municipal ECU
DuPage CU	Northside L FCU	Williamson County Catholic CU

## 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 (3/8) & ISS Meeting (3/6) – Save the Dates**

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 – Save the Date**

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.

## **Congratulations New CUDEs – Martha Shine & Anton Bossio**

Congratulations to Martha Shine, Park Manor Christian Church CU, and Anton Bossio, Alloya Corporate FCU, on earning designations as Credit Union Development Educators (CUDE™) from the National Credit Union Foundation at the end of 2025. This graduating class joins more than 3,000 credit union advocates from 35 countries who have previously received their CUDE™ designation. Details about the program are [available here](#).

## **Bite of Reality App – Spanish Version Now 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.

## **2025 Financial Education Outreach Recognition**

Credit unions in Illinois were recognized by the Credit Union Financial Education Network (CUFEN) as 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the most adults reached (20,063) and total adult financial education presentations (540). Illinois also ranked 5<sup>th</sup> for the total students reached (31,538).

Congratulations individual credit unions who were recognized by CUFEN:

- Land of Lincoln CU – 1<sup>st</sup> Place in Most Adults Reached \$150-499M Asset Size Category
- Land of Lincoln CU – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in Most Adults Presentations \$150-499M Asset Size Category
- BCU – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in Most Adults Reached \$1B+ Asset Size Category

## 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

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

### ICU Foundation Board of Directors

- Chair – **Michelle Balog**, NuMark CU
- Vice-Chair – **Kerriann Mills**, BCU
- Secretary/Treasurer – **Susan Toalson McGinty**, U of I Community CU
- Lou Bicanic**, Midwest Members CU
- Janel Cabadas**, Earthmover CU
- Dr. Joronda Crawford**, Israel Methcomm FCU
- Mark Dietrich**, Revity CU
- John Fiore**, Consumers CU
- Hope Garrett**, Education Personnel FCU
- Tom Pierce**, Access CU
- Amber Scott**, 1<sup>st</sup> MidAmerica CU

Ex Officio Directors:

**Libby Calderone**, ICUL President/CEO

**Joe Kregul**, ICUL Board Chair

**Michael Abraham**, ICUL Board Vice-Chair

**Jose Garcia**, ICUL Board Treasurer

**Pete Fauth**, ICUL Board Secretary

**Foundation Staff**

[Melanie Murphy](#), Executive Director

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