



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Kelly Zilinsky
Phone: 630-821-7204**

NuMark is Awarded the Desjardins Youth Financial Education Award

October 29, 2021 - NuMark Credit Union is the proud recipient of the 2020 Desjardins Youth Financial Literacy Award. This award comes after their work in providing a virtual financial literacy learning experience to young students during the COVID-19 Pandemic during 2020. The Credit Union National Association (CUNA) created the Desjardins program to recognize leadership within the credit union movement on behalf of financial literacy for all ages. This First Place Award was presented to NuMark during the Illinois Credit Union League 2021 Annual Convention.

During the Pandemic, NuMark recognized that financial literacy was the key to helping members during a confusing and trying time. With a focus on the younger generation, who were already having to learn virtually, NuMark took it as an opportunity to redesign their youth financial literacy offerings to provide a virtual option. This quick pivot required them to learn to use virtual meeting software effectively while adapting programs to fit a virtual or hybrid environment.



NuMark revised its “Mad City Money” and “Moonjars” programs so they could be taught virtually by teachers, youth leaders, park districts and parents. Both programs put students in the position of making wise financial choices. Through the Moonjar program, the youngest students hear a story that talks about the concepts of spending, saving and sharing. With the Mad City Money simulation, students are put in real-life situations where they learn more about life choices and budgeting. When adapting these programs to be provided virtually, electronic handouts/workbooks, teaching guides, and pre-recorded videos were created to be able to send these offerings ahead of time to teachers, parents or youth group leaders. These were crucial because they could be completed by the students remotely if an adult was presenting on a virtual platform.

The overall goal for NuMark was to create the virtual learning options and deliver them to at least one group of students either with a youth group, park district, classroom or in a home school setting. NuMark met that goal and delivered the Moonjars program to Pershing Elementary School and the Mad City Money program to Three Rivers Church’s Junior High School Youth Group. “We enjoyed the Mad City Money program a lot. It was great being able to have the instructor digitally over a screen during the pandemic”, says Youth Group leader, Mat Tuck. The students had a lot of fun as well. Here are a few humorous comments they shared while learning during the Mad City Money program:

- “I’ve got a garage but no car.” - Sarah, after realizing she spent too much on a nice house and couldn’t afford a car.
- “She can take the bus.” - Conor, when buying vehicles for himself and his spouse.
- “Free is my favorite word now.” - William



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Kelly Zilinsky
Phone: 630-821-7204**

Altering these programs has given NuMark the tools to be able to take financial literacy out of the classroom. In our evolving world that has been changed by the Pandemic, being able to adapt and create a learning experience for the younger generation is vital. But this is all a part of a larger plan for NuMark. They plan to expand and offer virtual financial education to adults and underserved communities. NuMark believes in the credit union mission and are committed to serving their communities by providing financial services where they are needed most. Their overarching goal is to serve more members, help them do more with their money and achieve their dreams.

NuMark wants to thank CUNA for this award, along with the NuMark team who made this virtual program a success. They are looking forward to expanding and providing more of these virtual options in the future.

NuMark Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative serving those who live or work in Northeastern Illinois and Northwest Indiana and have been serving members in this community for over 65 years. See NuMark Credit Union for auto loans, mortgages, checking accounts, business services and more. Find NuMark Credit Union on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Pinterest](#) and [Twitter](#)! For more information call (815) 729-3211 or visit numarkcu.org.

###